Jo: Hoskinson

THE HONOVR of Chiualrie.

Set downe in the moſt Famous Hiſtorie of the Magnanimious and Heroike Prince *Don Bellianis*: Sonne vnto the Emperour *Don Bellaneo* of *Greece*.

Wherein are deſcribed, the ſtraunge and dangerous *Aduentures that him befell.*

With his loue towards the Princeſſe *Florisbella*: Daughter vnto the *Souldan* of *Babylon*.

Engliſhed out of Italian, by *L. A.*

Sed tamen eſt triſtiſſima ianua noſtræ,
Et labor eſt vnus tempora prima pati.

LONDON,
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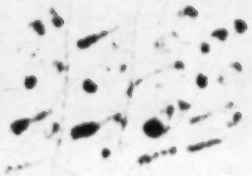

To the right Worſhipfull his ſpeciall Patron, Maiſter *Iohn Rotherham*, Eſquire, one of the ſixe Clarkes of her *Maieſties moſt Honourable Court of Chauncery*.

SVch, ſo great, and infinit are the fauors (Right Wo. Sir) that from the bounteous liberallitie of your faire conditions, I haue without deſert receiued: that by no meanes, in no reſpect nor in the leaſt degree, my greateſt duetie can no way ſatiſfie by any actiue deede: Saue with a willing minde, alwayes acknowledging it ſelfe vnable to cancell the great bondes for the ſame. Which in my doubtfull thoughts reuoluing, beeing by perſwaſions wonne, to pubiſh the excerciſe of ſome vacant houres: & remẽbring that at your Wo. houſe at *Semars*, I began the practiſe of the Italian tongue (as theſe fewe ſheetes of paper there commenced, doe beare teſtimonie) I cannot but in ſigne of my dutie, preſent this ſlender indeuor to your Wo. kinde acceptance, crauing pardon for this audacious boldeneſſe; which confidently hoping to obtaine, I doe then beſeech you, to patronage it, as the firſt token of my thankfull heart (beeing deſtitute of all other meanes to doe it:) Whoſe rude and harſh diſcourſes, cannot in his infãt growth yet better pleaſe, through the myſtie couert of groſſe barbariſme, in an vnpoliſht wit, onely ſupporting her weakenes, againſt al accidents of inſuing harms,

on the ſtrongpiller of your fauourable lookes, which graunted, my wandring deſires ſhall triumph in the victorie of their owne wiſhes: and reſt incouraged to labour in their ſecond ſowing, with more perfection, to your laſting praiſes. Whoſe continuing loue, I onely pray, may by no ſiniſter occaſions, drowne mee in the obliuious center of forgetfulneſſe, from your deare remẽbrance, which is the anchorage of my hopes, that no longer in a mortall world doo wiſh may breath, then from your dutie they decline, or the grateful memorating (being al I craue) of your incomparable merits. Whoſe life with many, many yeares increaſe, in all earthly happineſſe, with augment of dignities in this terrene orbe, and in the future, the crowne of ioyes, infallible, the onely ſole Ruler of them both, may grant you in all largeſſe.

Your VVorſhips humblie deuoted.

L. A.

To all gentle Readers.

Euen as a yong child newly, (as I may say) creept frō his cradle, indeuouring to pronoūce with perfection, his natural language for his future vse, is first instructed to spell, before he be put to reading, & to read, ere hee expound: So I, whose rough skill, and harsh vnfiled wit, wanting the practisse of continuing time, being disfurnisht of Natures helpes, and Artes polisht disciplines, must seeme to goe, before I may presume to flie, trusting to my owne vnfledged winges, leaste with rash asspiring Icarus, *I ouerwhelme my helpes in the recordlesse Caue of euerlasting disgrace.* I *speake this (most courteous and gentle Readers) for that I had some fewe monethes paste, onely for my priuate recreation, in idle houres, imitated in this Historie, the inuention of a forraine wit, whose conceit beeing commended by diuers Gentles, of no meane desert, haue by their importunate intreaties, forced me (altogether vnwilling) to make known the rude excercise of my vacant leasure, which at length to satisfie their requestes (not my desires) I did resolue to doe, onely thereby to make you sport, in the tedious passage of these winter nightes, if other pastimes doe not disturbe it. For on this sole hope it onely leanes, that beeing the first sprigge of a young plant, set in a barren ground, ouergrowne with weeds, so it wil obtaine your general gentle*

expectance,

acceptance, with a fauourable pardon for this raſh preſume. Defending it with the ſhield of your fauours, which wi'l be a ſufficient tower, wel armed againſt al ſcandalizing tongus, that but make an ecchoing noyſe, with their ayrie wordes, to harme none ſaue themſelues, by the rebounding backe of their reprochfull tauntes, euen on their barking ſelues. But walled with hope, that the gentleneſſe of your vertues, will nothing derogate from your names, by kindly accepting my good-will, I end: praying, that all preſent and enſuing happineſſe, and content, may euery way anſwere your owne wiſhes: requeſting, that where you diſlyke, there you would mildely amend, and not vtterly condemne.

The Honor of Chiualrie,

set downe in the most famous Historie of the Inuincible Prince *Don Bellianis*, sonne vnto the Emperour Don Bellaneo *of* Greece, *wherein are described his aduentures, and loue towards the Princesse* Florisbella, *Daughter to the Soldane of* Babilon.

CHAP. I.

Howe the Emperour *Don Bellaneo* married the Princesse *Clarinda*, daughter vnto *Toledano* King of *Spaine*.

WHen the Grecian Monarchie flourished with most glorie, triumphing ouer the greatest part of Christendome, as is recorded in the large annuall Registers of Fristone (surnamed the Wise) preseruers of the neuer dying fame, & euer memorable acts of the worthies of this time: There then soly swaied the awful imperious Crowne and Septer, an Emperour named Don Bellaneo, who through his rare vertues, gentle affabilitie, gallant conditions, royall and heroycke deedes, his admirable regard, and most great care in the administration of equall iustice to his subiects, not taking the ones right to make the other rich, was of them so highly admired, loued, and reuerenced, that the superfluitie of words in reuealing it, would impouerish rather then inrich the perpetuitie of his neuer dying glorie. This

Emperour was altogether in his youth inclined and inflamed with desire of haughtie attempts, the conquering of forraine Nations, Kingdomes, and Signories, wherein hé neuer rested, continually betaking himselfe (clad in abilements of militarie armes, in field against his foes, manifesting his vncredible valour, and his well knit sinowes, which nothing disagreed from the greatnesse of his minde. The familiar vsance of his nobles and vassales was such, that they might bee rather tearmed his companions and fellowes, then subiects. Hee allwayes would hazard his person in greatest and most difficult daungers offered him, accounting that honour to bee supremest, which was obtained with most toyle and perill, and iudging it better that straungers shoulde blaze abroade the greatnesse of his militarie fortune and magnanimitie in warre, then the commending of his Souldiours deedes, in so much that their cheefest acts in the perilous battels, was to guard their Lorde: for so great was his courragious heart, not fearing mightie and puissant Giants, nor the strength of admired Knights, but as pretending all honour to himselfe, and esteeming it but little, would as it were headlong, runne where hee founde most daungers, that sometimes his whole campe might hardly defende him from the furie of contrarious Squadrons, where his hercicke thought could not harbour the least signe of pale trembling feare: in which kinde of life hee more ioyed, then if hee liued among all the delicious and delighting pleasures, that any Monarches could yeelde in greatest plentie. Whereby his all wondering fame was so vulgarde, throughout the farre remoted Nations of the spacious Orbe, which they accounted as a blazing comet, presaging the future ruine, that his bare name caused in them such agues of timerous feare, as dooth the furious thunder (renting the darkened welkin with mightie showers of earth drowning waters) in the heartlesse multitude of rusticke countrey swaynes. By which hee became so odious to all his enemies, that they would often

often giue their owne bloud as a reward for his death, forejudging his life would bee their vtter desolation. But hauing consumed the greatest parte of his youth in hostile armes, by counsell, and importunitie of his nobilitie and subiects, beeing often thereto vrged (though against his will) hee returned with wreathes of immortall tryumph, to the famous and euer-glorious Cittie of Constantinople, from whence were dispatched in his behalfe, to demaunde in marriage the Princesse Clarinda, Daughter to Toloian, King of Hesperia, to whome in Embassy were sent personages sufficient to make knowne his high magnificence, among whome went as cheefe the King of Hungaria (cosin to the Emperour, and the Prince of Macedon, with many Dukes and Lords, with the haughtiest pompe and royallest shew of Embassage that euer went to any Potentate. This vnderstood by the Iberian king, he in person came to meete them, musing at the sodaine comming of such states to seeke him from so farre Countreyes: who beeing seene of them, with great courtesie that abounded in them, alighted, dooing him that dutie that might appertaine to such a King: who perceiuing it, with the like solemnitie entertained them, where ouerpassing their greetings, they remounted a horseback, and by the way breefely discoursed of many things, vntill they arriued at the famous Cittie Hispalis, where they were receiued againe with many verie sumptuous shewes, prepared onely for that purpose, to expresse the riches and greatnesse of his state: and approaching the royall Pallace of Hispalis, they alighted, the King Toloian leading in one hande the King of Hungarie, and Macedon in the other hande, entred the great Hall, where the Queene and the Princesse Clarinda with diuers Peeres, expected their arriuall, and most maiestically receiued them anewe, and the King of Hungarie kneeled to the Queene, desiring to kisse her hande, but shee refraining it, tooke him vp in her armes, imbracing and honouring him as worthily as the dignitie of

his estate merited, dooing the like vnto the Macedonian Prince and other Nobles, that also prostrated themselues before the Princesse, who entertained them with such gallant grace, that they greatly admired at her rare beautie, and singular perfections, thinking themselues verie happie, to haue so absolute a Ladye for their Empresse. No sooner ended their salutations, but the Tables beeing layde, they sate downe, and were vsed according to their magnificence: afterward they had appointed them large and rich lodgings, by his maiesties command, retaining in the pallace (the more to honour them) the two kings. The next morning were summoned the cheefe Lords to parleament, and their present audience to the kingly Embassadors, who being thither sent for to their Senate houses, deliuered from their Lord and Emperour their Embassey: for which the Spanish king rested highly contented, and replied he was fully determined to accord with the Emperours requeſt, therwith remaining highly satisfied, and so they might prepare themselues, for in ten daies she and they should be prouided of all necessaries: wherat they greatly reioyced, so did the Quéene and Princesse with that marriage, hauing before heard of the Emperors rare and absolute conditions. At length all things ordered, they departed, leauing the Court in great solitude through the princesses absence, who with her traine continued their daily iourneyes, till they came to Constantinople, where they were welcommed, and the nuptials solemnized with most magnificent tryumphs, torneyes, and all maner of pastimes, according to the greatnes of such estates.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The birth of Don *Bellianis* of *Greece*, and of a ſtraunge aduenture did befall him a hunting, by which he parted from the Emperour his father.

NOw the Hiſtorie doth record, that in proceſſe of time the Emperour Don Bellaneo had of the Empreſſe Clarinda three ſonnes, the eldeſt called Don Bellianis of Greece, that inherited the Empire after his fathers death: the ſecond Don Clarineo of Spaine: the third, Don Lucidamor of Theſſalie, who not onely in valour and Millitarie diſcipline, equalled their Father, but excelled all others of their tyme, in all gallaunt and woorthie heroicall exerciſes: inſomuch that all men had them in high admiration, ſpecially the prince Don Bellianis, that was educated according as his royall ſtate merited, and the heire of ſuch an Empire required, vntill hee came to the age of eight yeeres, in which no Donzell in all the Court (though he doubled his yeres) could excell him (there being verie manie) chiefly the Prince of Macedons ſonne, by name Don Brianell: another of the King of Hungarie, called Don Arſileo the ſtrong, through his exceſſiue ſtrength: for being knighted, he would often betweene his armes ſmother puiſſant knights, ſo that next the Prince he was accounted chiefeſt. In which time they were inſtructed and taught thoſe thinges as fitted ſuch Princes, wherein they ſo well profited, but ſpecially the prince Don Bellianis, who much applied himſelfe to Muſicke, that in thoſe dayes none ſurpaſſed him: that the Emperor ſeeing him ſo much giuen vnto it, was not ſlacke in prouiding for him, the excellenteſt tutors that might be found: to whom, and thoſe he had, the Prince highly rewarded. In which worthie exerciſe,

he busied himselfe, till he perfected the age of twelue yeare, with such forwardnesse, that euerie one admired him, assuredly imagining, that within the compasse of the whole earth, was not a more excellent and rarer spirit,

At this time hee was taught the science of Armes, in which hee shewed himselfe so expert, as it were a thing hee shoulde by inheritaunce possesse, that he seemed to neede no teacher. In this exercise he spent two yeares. About which time the Emperour beeing desirous to hunt in a spacious Forrest, three miles distant from the Cittie, and beeing prouided of all necessaries, hee departed to it with the Empresse, his sonne Don Belianis, (leauing his two Brethren in Court, that then desired not to go with them) but there accompanied him Don Brian II, and the Prince Arsileo, with manie Knights and Lordes of high estæme, with so great and royall traine, as they were going to pitch a battell. The Prince Don Belianis did lead by the reynes the Empresse his mothers Palfrey, and the Emperour went conforted with the Princes Arsileo, and Don Brianell, of whome hee rested greatly satisfied.

In this equipage, within a while they arriued at the place where straight their sport beganne, that with the noyse of hounds and hornes, they drowned the Eccho of their owne voyces. A while after, from that side the Empresse sat, there issued forth a Lion, and a Beare, with so swift a course, that though they would haue hidde themselues, they could not find anie place. The Lion ranne straight against the Prince, who although it somewhat scarde him, did not therefore feare him, but with an vndaunted heart, set himselfe before him, with his sworde in hande, which at his side he wore. But the Lion ioyned with him so suddainlie, that he wounded him sorelie in the forehead, and griping him betweene his armes, thrust one of his pawes into his flesh, making a deepe wounde: but the Prince not dismated thereat, nor loosing his courageous minde, gaue such a thrust from his armes downewardes,

right

right to his heart, that the Lion through extreame paine left him. Then looking towardes the Empresse, sawe that the Beare with diuelish furie, hauing ouerthrowne the Prince his Cosen, (agaynst which his great strength nought preuailing) dragged ouer the Mountaine toppes, which hee seeing, (although grieuously wounded, and the Lion not flying) straight tooke his horse, and with all speede followed the way the Beare had taken, not respecting the many Knights that went in his rescue, nor the Empresse outcries, forbidding his enterprise, fearing hee shoulde faint through the murh blood hee had lost by his woundes: but counterpoysing all these thinges with the great loue hee bare his Cosen, stayed not, but in all haste thrust himselfe into those greate and thicke Groaues, through which hee left groat quantitie of his blood, that it was no little ease vnto him, beeing on foote. For the way was so thicke, and naught, that it was vnpossible for him to ride therein. For else the running of his Horse woulde haue putte him in extreame daunger. But continuing his way through that fearefull Groaue, following the noyse of a lamentable and pittifull crie which hee hearde: and beeing vnable to passe further through wearie fayntnesse, set him downe: and seeing howe much bloud hee had lost by his woundes, and the daunger which hee knewe his louing Cosen to bee in, put him into a melancholie sorrowe. But long was he not so, by reason of a great noyse that suddanly arose out of the Thicket thereby, whereat hee faintlie beganne to rise. And looking what might bee the cause thereof, sawe the most horrible and fearefull Beare, hasting to the place where hee was: but hee setting himselfe before him to hinder his further hurting his Cosen. The Beare espying him, furiously ranne to assault him, but by the Lions experience, hee cast himselfe aside, and so let him passe with his diuelish furie, and turning about to strike him, perceyued the Beare to runne in a Caue that was at the foote of a steepie Mountaine there adioyning:

whereat verie ioyfull of such a mischaunce, went to his cosen, who amazed at that hee had seene, was likewise comming to him, & with great loue embracing him, and seeing his wounds bleede verie fast, said: without doubt, (good cosen) you are sore wounded, wherefore I pray you rest here while I seek out our companie, and see your wounds dressed. I am not at this present (replied Don Belianis) in such necessitie, but may accompanie you, yet would I gladlie knowe what straunge aduenture is in yon hollowe Caue. For as God shall helpe me we hither are not come, without some speciall secret. It behoues not you now (sayd Arsileo) for your wounds will not suffer you to knowe the ende of this straunge aduenture. For in the lingring of your cure, you may endaunger your selfe greatly. Neuer may it be said (replied Don Belianis) that I hence part and not know it. Whereupon hand in hand they went till they came to the Caue, whose obscure darknesse was able to daunt the stoutest heart. But those hautie Princes arriued there fearlesse of any thing, and had scarce entred the same ten paces, but Don Arsileo vnable to passe further, was, (maugre his strength) thrust forth: and though hee assayed to reenter, yet could hee not, but was with greater force still rebated backe: which extreamly greeued him, seeing he could not enter to helpe his cosen. Meanewhile, hee heard within a rumour of great blowes, as if many Knights were in fight togither. For after the Prince parted from his cosen, he went forwards through the Caue, beating his head against the walles on euery side, till he had passed that great darknesse, that hee founde himselfe in a hall, where he sawe a huge Piller, with certaine Arabian letters, which hee going to reade, by the light that proceeded from a Window thereby, was forbidden it by a most deformed Giant, that seeing himselfe before (hauing in his hande bounde with a mightie Chaine, the monstrous Beare causer of his comming thither) with a terrible ecchoing sound of his hoarse voyce, thus spake.

Thou art not permitted (poore captiue damzell) to reade

the

the Letters of the brazen Piller, for I will hinder thée thereof, beeing héere placed for the same purpose, vntill the Prophecie bee fulfilled which it containeth. The Prince rested greatly amazed to sée so misshapen a Monster, that hee supposed him some infernall shadowe, sooner then a mortall substaunce. But hee with a neuer daunted minde, made this replie. I maye not enter battell with thée (thou fearefull beast) hauing not yet receyued the order of Knighthoode, which if I had, although thou shouldest neuer so much gainesay it, yet I woulde not go hence, vntil such time as I had read them.

No reason shall serue thee (replied the Giant) to kéepe thée from death by my handes, for here was I set for that purpose to welcome him with it, that shoulde presume to enter this my forbidden habitation. And so ending his speech, hée let loose the furious Beare, which with his diuelish pawes ranne agaynst the Prince, and the Giant laying hand to a great smiter hanging at his side, did the like, and beeing nigh him, reached him a mightie blowe on the heade: but hee that feared more the Giants Smiter then the Beares strength, though bigge and ougly, got betweéne the Giants armes, that hee coulde not hurt him, making the blowe vaine, and the Smyter with the swifte force it carried, lighted on the grounde, and flewe out of hande. Meanewhile the Prince strooke the Gyant vppon the thigh, that no more hurt him then had it fallen on an Adamant: which hee perceyuing, turned to the Beare, yet coulde no more wounde him then the Gyant: which vexed him to the heart, and seeing the Giant returned vppon him, got behinde the Piller, whereon the Letters were, vsing it as a Shéelde. But the Giant at this time suddainly came vppon him, that hee coulde scarce effect it, who raysing his steeled Smyter with both his handes, gaue such a mightie blowe on the heade, that hee thought it parted in two, yet it did him no harme, saue that the strength thereof forced him backewardes two or

thæ steppes. At this time ths Beare tooke holde of his arme with his pawes, that renting his hunting Jacket, wounded him sorelie: but seeing himselfe in so immenent daunger, was once againe forced to take the Piller for his defence, whereon hæ espied a Swoorde fixed, whose workemanship was such, that the like in no tyme was euer seene, wherein he more at that time reioyced, then had hæ bæne invested vniuersall Lorde of the whole earth, or made a greater Monarch then his Father. And without delay stepping to it, verie easilie and lightlie drewe it forth, which hee had no sooner done, but that there was heard a most horrible noyse, as if the dissolution of the worlde were then, that vnable to stande, was faine to get holde of the Piller. Yet scarce was the earthquake past, but that deformed Giant prepared himselfe to fight, which the Prince seeing, and ioyfull with the obtained Sword, therewith thrust at his bodie with the vtmost strength of his arme, that the Swoorde appeared at his backe, that straight the Giant fell to the grounde, as doth some mightie Oake, rent with a Whirlewind by the rootes. And looking for the Beare, founde him also deade, as thinges that had no longer tearme of life, then the lasting of the inchauntment, which ended with the drawing of the Swoorde from the Pillar. And that noyse bæing heard of Don Arsileo, that remayned at the Caues mouth, tryed if hæ might againe enter it, which without anie trouble hæ did. And taking his hunting Faucline with him, hee cast himselfe resolutelie into it, and came to Don Belianis, at the time hæ ended the Giants life, and was giuing thankes to God, that hee had deliuered him from so great perill and daunger, and with wonderous gladnesse to see themselues againe together, ranne to embrace each other, and Arsileo thus sayde. You haue not bæne long (deare Cosen) though so sorelie wounded, as you were in slaying this so straunge and most marvaylous aduenture, to your admyrable honour, and blasing fame, whereby I do assuredlie beleeue, you will terminate

all

all others with like expedition. So that the perpetuall recorde of your Fathers glorious name (which hee in manie yeares with his great paine obtayned) will bee, with the neuer dying memorie of your famous deedes, and the eternitie of your actes, in short time extinguished, and in oblitious darknesse ouerwhelmed. No not so (good Cosen, replyed Don Behanis) but let vs reade these Letters fixed vpon this Pillar, which cost mee no lesse bloud, then if they contained some matter of great importaunce: which they read to this effect.

A Prophecie, and is fulfilled in the 37. Chapter.

In the time to come when the fiercenes of the couragious Lions by the greatnes of my skill shalbe put in greater feare by them that in valour had so great part, the fearfull keepers of my caue being slain, and the sword won, wherwith the hoing shalbe lost, and the dead put in possession of the reobtained, with the greatest strangenesse of obtainers, which vntil that time was euer heard of, shalbe restored to their royall blood, and the true possessors known en.

Greatlie were the two Princes amazed hereby, not vnderstanding those wordes, though plainelie they were meant by Don Behanis, seeing hee had ended the aduenture. Great is the neede (sayde Don Bisileo) you seeme to haue of present care for your woundes which I see to bee so deepe, that I feare you may fall into some notable daunger, through the great quantitie of bloud you haue lost. Which was true, for though the Prince with the ioy of his good successe, and in beholding his rich Sworde, thought not on his great and daungerous wounds, which were such that if anie other of lesse, and weaker constitution, and couragiousnesse of minde had had them, couldc not so haue sustained himselfe.

But while they were thus talking, from a most sumptuous Chamber, there issued forth a beautious Damsell, cloathed in a Crimson sattin robe, so great, that the traine thereof trayled on the ground.

This Lady was led betweene two Knights, auncient and of great grauitie, and on her attended twelue Damsels in the same liuerie, all shewed by their faces some heauie cause of melancholike sorrow, who beeing before the Prince, prostrated themselues on the ground: which hee seeing, did also the like, and intreated them to rise: to which shee said. I will not rise most excellent Prince, vntill first you haue graunted mee my demaunde: I doo graunt it (gracious Ladie) sayde the Prince, and not onelye that, but manye others, for my desire is onelye for to serue such as your owne selfe.

I do render many infinit thanks (replied she) neither did I looke for lesse from so high and honoured a Prince as you, guarded with such royall bountie, and magnificent excellencie: and rysing, tooke him by the hand, and entred the Chamber, which, though Don Bellanis had seene manye verye fayre and rich, in his Fathers Pallace, yet iudged hee that to bee royallest hee might see: for the walles seemed of christall, through which appeared such diuersitie of pictures, as the whole Vniuerse coulde scarce containe more: the flore seemed of Transparant Emeraldes, which so amased their wondring sences, that they stood a good while gazing on it: till Don Bellianis turning to the Lady that held him by the hand, saide. Although (fayre Ladie) the entrance of this Caue seemed so timorous in sight, yet the varietie of these raryties which it within containes, presents more shewes to the outward sight, thē the whole world besides, & without reason, was it not made with such extreames, as to be inhabited with so excellent beauty within, and guarded with so great feare without, to forbid the enterāce to all attempters. The Lady cōceiuing great pleasure at the Princes words, answered, I could not choose but blush

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(moſt gracious Prince) at your words (though ſo honored by them) knew I not your great courteſie, that farre ſurpaſſeth all others of this time, which cauſeth mée to prize my ſelfe more then I ſhould, or my merits deſerue (though I ſhould not vnder your protection do it) becauſe all honoured prayſes and deſerued merits reſt in your ſelfe. But ouerpaſſing this which is ſo well knowne of euerie one, let my intreaties now ſo preuaile with you, that my maidens may cure your wounds. I haue no wound (replied the prince, that ſo much needeth cure, ſaue my deſire to know the ende of this aduenture, and alſo who ſhée is that ſo honoureth me. Verie quickly ſhall you know it (faire Lord) (ſaith the Princeſſe) but firſt muſt your woundes be cured, leaſt you incurre ſome greater danger, and after ſhall you know the cauſe of your comming hither, whom I am, and what elſe you will, all being doone by her will that kéepes me heere. Thereupon the Prince was vnclothed by thoſe Ladies, and one of them cured him moſt ſkilfully, hauing great knowledge in that art, and layde on a ſumptuous bed, they left him to his reſt. The Prince Arſileo remained in talke with the damſell of many things, ſpecially of the aduenture of that day, greatly admiring what Don Bellianis his coſin had atchieued, beeing ſo yong of yeares. Do not ſo wonder (moſt noble Prince (ſayd the Ladie, for in compariſon of that this Prince ſhall do, this is the leaſt. Much marualled Arſileo to be knowne in that place, not remembring that he euer ſaw any of thoſe Ladies, and ſo continued in pleaſing chat till ſupper time, when the tables being couered, they ſate them downe. And héere leaue wee them, to ſhew what befell the Emperour Don Bellaneo, and what he did.

CHAP. III.

How the Emperour departed to seeke out his sonne.

AT the many outcries the Empresse gaue Don Bellanis her sonne to returne from the Beares pursuite, diuers of those knights that were a hunting, hasted after, following the signes of the bloud, till they came to the place where hee did sitte, and there found so much bloud, that they rested wonderous dismaide, yet saw they not the caues mouth, by reason that the entrie thereof was there stopt, and made on the further side. But not staying there, they beganne to seeke the Prince among the thicke groues, with all speedie diligence, yet could finde neither seeing nor signe of him, whereat they were so amazed, seeing euerie where such quantitie of bloud, as they imagined he could not be farre from thence, yet durst not without him returne to the Empresse. The like happened the Emperour, whome a certaine knight tolde how a horrible Beare dragged the Prince Arlileo, as is before mentioned, who understanding it, made no long stay, but accompanied with many knights, began to seeke that way hee had heard they were gone, and after long toyles seeing himselfe in that thicke wood, and doubting some mischance might befall him, called for his armour (whereof he neuer went unprouided, as one delighting more in militarie exercise, then in hunting, and was with all speede armed, & mounting on his horse, put himselfe through the forrest with one sole Squire, commanding the rest of his traine, to seeke the Prince on the other side (nought prevailing with him their intreatie to go with him) but hee commanded the Prince Don Bryanell to take his launce, cast his sheeld at his backe, and leauing his companie, verie sorrowfull departed, fully determined not to returne

returne to Constantinople, vntill he heard eyther of the princes liues or deaths, for whom he so greatly greeued, that the more hee thought to dissemble it, the more his sorrow increased. Thus in his iourney leauing him, we will declare what his knights did, which a little after met with all the rest standing by the caues mouth, who knowing of the cruell chaunce that befell the Prince Don Bellianis, began greatly to lament him, but seeing it little preuailed, sought him anew in many places, till the darkesome night ouertooke them, which forced them to returne vnto their tents, where they left the Empresse that inraged with greefe, would haue commanded their heads to be stroken off, that consented to the Emperour to depart, not so much esteeming the Princes losse, as his sodaine going through those dangerous woods, where certainely she thought he would be deuoured by sauage beasts, inhabiting that forrest: wherefore straight recommanded that with many lights and torches they should againe bee looked for ouer all the mountaines: but not finding them worthily they deserued to bee excused, and seeing neither of them could be found, greatly greeued, they all returned to the Cittie with bitter execrations, cursing the houre they first determined to come to that place, causer of the Empresses inraged greefe, that none durst speake vnto her.

CHAP. IIII.

The strange and dangerous aduenture that befell the Emperour in the discouered Castle, seeking the Prince Don *Bellianis* his sonne.

THe Emperor putting himself through that wilde groue, taking his way diuersly, hauing no certaintie of any thing, so trauailed til it was night, with great greefe, seeing he could effect nothing to his intent by reason of the nights obscurity, alighted: so did Brianell, who vnbridled their horses, that

that they might fæde on the græne graſſe, which with ouermuch labour were ſo tyred, that they could hardly any longer beare their Maiſters. But the Emperour being in great trouble and anguiſh of minde for the loſſe of both the Princes, yet more ſorrowed for the Empreſſes græfe (which was not little) that hee ſuppoſed ſhe would conceiue, ſeeing neither of them returne, then for ought elſe. For he certainely thought that if they were deuoured by wilde beaſts, ſome ſigne thereof would bee founde, ſo that perſwading himſelfe the contrarie, he parted aſide to reſt, but hee had not ſlept ſcarſe two houres, when ſuddainly he awaked at the loude cryes he heard, that all the vallies ecchoed with the noyſe, which with more vehemence ſtill ſeemed to increaſe, as if they proceeded from ſome in great neceſſitie ſuſtaining outrage: whereat the good Emperour was ſo amazed, with trouble on all ſides, cheefely at that time, yet as one ſearching ſuch daungers, commanded Don Bryanell to bridle his horſe, while he laced on his helme, and caſting his ſheeld at his back, mounted on his horſe, not ſetting foote in ſtirrop, and taking his launce, thruſt himſelfe through the groue, following the voyce he heard, imagining ſome of the Princes might be there: but feeling himſelfe wearie with much trauel, yet ſuppoſing he approached euerie foote nigher to the lamentable crie, ſpied hard by him a high Caſtle, well fortified with Towers, though by the darkeneſſe of the night he could little diſcerne it. But comming to the gate, perceiued the voyce proceeded thence, and with great deſire to know the cauſe, knocked at the ſame, yet none anſwered him: which more vged him to learne the force and violence within vſed, ſo that he went round about the Caſtle, but could find no enterance: whereat tyred with delay, and the lamentable voyce increaſing, ſpied a rope, wherewith from the top of the Caſtle, they drewe vppe ſtones, with a certaine deuiſe they had within. So the Emperour finding no other entrie, bade Don Bryanell vnarme him, who ſayde, What meane you to doo my good Lord? will you by force haue your enterance through theſe ſtonie walles?

I intend nothing else (replied the Emperour) and therefore alight and vnarme me: which done, binde my Armour to this coard, that therewith, if I haue time, I may Arme my selfe aloft. I thinke it a meere madnesse (saide the Prince) to hazard your person in so imminent a danger: for besides that the cõming forth seemes so difficult, I beleeue you hardly wil be suffered to see what kind of people doth inhabit it, and so haue scarce time to vse your Armour. I can do no otherwise (answered the Emperour) for it would be imputed to my euerlasting shame, if I should suffer this wrong to passe vnpunished, or not vsing that which my state bindes me to. So dismounting, hee was disarmed, and getting holde of the rope, taking with him his sword and shalde, he clymed thereby to the Castle top, as easily as if he had gone vp a paire of stayres, and calling for his Armour, Don Brianell began to tye it to the corde. But it otherwise fell out then he imagined: for through the Castle gallerie, he sawe aboue ten Knights, pursued by two most fearefull giants, and ten other knights that laid on them great and mightie blowes: which the Emperour seeing, and wanting time to arme himselfe, imbraced his strong sheild, and opposed himselfe against the Giants, calling aloud vnto the knights, they should turne, and not cowardly flie for feare. They being affected with their shame, seeing a knight without Armour haue the corage to attẽpt such an enterprise, returned against the furious Gyant, who with fretting yre, to see that one onelie man should resist their furie, set vppon him with great battel-axes in their strong hands. But hee whose heart neuer feared their deedes, with an vndanted mind stayed for them, and making one lose his blowe, receiued the others on his sheelde, which was such, that parted in two, it fell to the ground, hardly sauing his hand from following it, yet was it a little wounded. Whereat full of rage, he stroke one of them on the head, that the sword being of a good temper, and gouerned by so puissant an arme, it cleft it downe to the eyes, wherewith he fell with such violence, as when a tower is ouerturned by the furie of a suddaine earth-

quake, hereupon the other ourreached him with his are, that had he not warded it with his sword, it had bin the last he should receiue, for it descended with such rigour, that his sword was cut in two, and he wounded pitiously on the head: who then seeing himselfe in such danger, closed straight with the Giant, that not able to shunne him, they both tooke holde of one anothers armes, demeaning themselues so valiantly, that the Emperour with the surpassing strength he vsed, lost much bloud by his wounds, which at length made him (being furiously moued) hoyst his enemie in the aire, and threw him to the ground, euen in the place where he came vp, and quickly pushing him with his hands, tumbled him headlong ouer the Tower, that with the fall he died: yet least he might reuiue, looking out of a window, he called to Don Brianell to kill him afore he arose, who straight cutte off his head. By this time the clearenesse of the morning beganne to shewe it selfe, when the Emperour looking towardes the flying Knights, perceiued them to bee put to the worst, by reason of one whose valour excelled the rest, seeming to bee of high descent, and their commaunder, which the Emperour seeing, tooke one of the dead Giants sheeldes, meaning to rescue them, whereat the knight turning to him to see where he hadde left the Giants, for beeing busie in fight with the knights, little thought they should haue such fortune, and seeing that horrible Giant dead, and howe the knight made against him, rested amazed, yet with great furie taking his sword with both handes, made towards the Emperour, which raysing aloft, gaue him such a blow on the sheeld, that it made him bowe to the ground, and doubling with another on the other side thereof, stroke cleane from his arme, sorely wounding him on the thigh, which the Emperour thought he had lost, that with mortall furie gaue such another on the right arme, that the greatest part thereof he cutte, forcing the knight to take his sword in his left hande, who with it would wounde him, but the Emperour that had learned to omitte no occasion, sustaining himselfe on his thigh, as well

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as he could, ſtroke at him ſo fierce a blow, which lighting on his hard tempered helme, it felde him almoſt dead to the grounde: yet greatly prayſing him for that hee hadde ſeene him doo (though he much had endaungered him) would not any otherwiſe hurt him, but going to ſuccour the knights of the Caſtle, ſawe they hadde valiantly reſiſted their aduerſaries, and ſo ſeeing euerie thing accomplished to his deſire, kneeled and rendered God great thankes for his deliuerie from ſo great daunger, being the greateſt hee euer had beene in, finding himſelfe vnarmed. But going to riſe, was not able to ſtande on his legges, though hee greatly ſtirred to doo it, by reaſon of his wounde, which by that time was colde. And turning to them of the Caſtle, that alreadie had ſlaine their enemies, who extreamely greeuing ſo to ſee him, would vncloath him to cure his woundes. But hee would not, till firſt they called his Page that remained without, which they did, wonderfully amazed at the haughtie courage of the knight, that ſo admirable and vnheard of deedes had done, comming to ſuch a place vnarmed, which they iudged to be the greateſt acte that euer was ſpoken of. And calling Don Bryanell, they tolde him what the Knight would haue, who verie ioyfull becauſe they tolde him hee was in no daunger of death, ſtraight mounted vppe the Caſtle ſtayres, where the Emperour was, greatly doubting his life, by reaſon he enterpriſed that aduenture without armour, and went to the place where they vncloathed him, & there dreſſed his woundes: which done, hee kneeled downe, demaunding his royall hands to kiſſe them. The Emperor imbraced him, and made him riſe: to whom Don Bryanell ſayd. Great was the feare that I was in for you my moſt excellent Lord, in that I was barred from bringing you your armor, ſeeing you run into ſo certaine perill, yet thinke I more eaſily you tumbled downe the Giant, then you did your ſelf mount vp vnto the top, giuing him no leiſure to vſe the rope for his eaſier deſcent. The Emperour much delighted in his pleaſant ſpeech, and commanded them to

leaue him alone to rest his tyred bodie, which the knight did, taking Don Bryanell with them, and desired him they might knowe who his maister was, and his name, assuring themselues, the whole earths circuit could not affoord his like for valour, and what chaunce had at such time brought him thither.

To whom Don Brianell answered, hee was called the vnknowne knight: and though he had a long time accompanied him, he knew no other name he had, and that trauailing ouer these mountaines, he heard the great cries within the Castle, with what else happened. So leauing their discourse, and thinking it time, went to serue the Emperour meate, whome they found more quiet (the paine of his woundes beeing mittigated) and after he had eaten, demanded the occasion that those Gyants so vsed them. We know not good sir (answered they) saue how a knight that came with them, knocked the last night at the Castle gate, intreating vs to let him in, requiring a lodging for that night, which we yelding to, opened the gate, mistrusting nothing lesse, then that which befell: but in the opening, he set vpon vs with those pittiesse Gyants, whom you slew. And when we sawe so many inconueniences, sent forth those cryes, togither with many women that were within. This (good sir) is all that we know of this aduenture: so that if you had not come when you did, we had all suffered a most cruell death.

Tell me, said the Emperour, what is become of a knight cloathed in an azure Armor? he is prisoner in a Tower (replied they) vntill we know your farther resolution what shall be don with him, woorthilie deseruing to bee tormented with a cruell death for his treacherie: but do not so (said the Emperour) for he is a very good knight, and deserueth no euill vsage, and therfore haue care he want nothing he shall neede, for I would not for any thing he should miscarrie: of him shall wee knowe the cause of their trayterous designe, which seeme is not without speciall occasion. Hereupon the knight went straight and

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drelled his wounds, who though hee had lost much blood, seemed couragious, as if he were at libertie. And after they had drelled him, he was conuaied to a faire Chamber, prouiding him with all necessaries, as the Emperour had commaunded. Who in this order remained tenne dayes in the cure of his wounds: when remembring the taske hee had vndertoke, determining to depart thence, went first to visite the wounded Knight, whom he found greatly amended of his wounds: and approching to his bedde side, asked him howe he felt himselfe. Well enough (aunswered hee) though with no little greefe for my badde successe: yet am I not sorie to bee ouercome, seeing it was by him, whose courage and valour, the strength of mightie Giants could not abate. But one thing I intreate of you (sir Knight) by the courtesie you haue shewen mee, you woulde vouchsafe to tell mee your name, that in those places where I shall come, I may publish your hautie deedes. It pleaseth mee (replyed the Emperour) conditionally, you also let me knowe yours, with the cause of your comming hither, with the truth thereof, whereto such a Knight as you is bound.

I am desirous to know you (said the Knight) that though it be agaynst the promise I haue made, and you promising mee to keepe it secrete, I will not denie it. Thereto I giue you my faith (aunswered the Emperour) and first knowe, I am Don Bellaneo, Emperour of Greece, that by certaine aduenture, not farre from hence, I parted from my traine, the rest hauing happened, as you haue seene. Ho immortall Gods (saide the Knight fetching a great sigh: are you he, whose name is so feared among all the Pagan nations? and he that neuer refused to assault so terrible and fierce Giants? And in breefe, he whose inuincible minde sheweth howe true the euerlasting fame of your perpetuall deedes is? and through the world of you is spred? Ho great Soldan, now by this dayes successe, thy determined purpose is vtterly made voide, hauing so strong an aduersarie left thee in thy world. It therefore behoues thee no more to think

of peace? And turning to the Emperour (who greatly amazed at his words, stood gazing on him) and dissembling his conceiued griefe. Supposing (renowmed Prince) the matter I shall disclose, to be of lesse consequence then it is, I wil in few words vnfold the truth thereof, though in the doing of it, to my selfe more then to any resulteth greatest losse. I know that your name (so fearefull among all Gentiles) beeing published in the Soldan of Siconias court, with the great destruction by you made of his people, and in all Paganisme, moued him by promise to bind himselfe to giue the one halfe of his dominions with the mariage of his daughter, to that knight, by whose valour your head were brought him. Also promising, that if in the enterprise he died, the halfe of his said dominions should notwithstanding be granted to his successiue heires. So I vnderstanding the great promise the Soldan had made, and greatlie louing his daughter, resolutely resolued, I departed to the kingdome of Antioch, whereof I am Lord, and with my selfe hauing determined what I ought to do, I left my court, accompanied with 500. knights, and 30. giants, purposing at your comming out of your palace, either to kill or imprison you: so shipping our selues, and landed not farre from hence, left our ships at anchor, thither to returne with your conquest. And that this we might better compasse, vnknowne, and vnseene, we agreed to take this Castell, and here remaine till occasion were offered vs to effect this pretence, being informed of the state of all things by a man whom on the coast we toke, whereby wee hither came, as you haue heard, and easily thought to haue taken it, being minded to let none suruiue to carry the newes abroad: but your incomparable valour hath frustrated our intent. Thus haue I declared vnto you all that in this case I can, whereto your great bountie, & magnanimous clemencie forced me: for notwithstanding I had so massacred your subiects, you caused me thus to be cured. My name is Don Gallaneo of Antioch, if you euer heard of me before: and so he made an ende to his speech. The Emperour rested wonderfull amazed, seeing

ſeeing with what audacity don Gallaneo had diſcouered him a deed of ſuch waight, for which he might greatly fear his deſerued punishment: but iudged him of hauty courage, conſidering how cõfidently he had put himſelf in his hands, hauing againſt him committed ſo high treacherie: and ſhewing no maner of alteration, made him this anſwer. Truly Prince Don Gallaneo, you haue plainly expreſſed the baliancie of your minde, in ſo openly bewraying that, which by any other meanes I could not haue knowne, whereby you haue doubled the cauſe of my imaginarie thoughts, ſeeing in ſuch a knight ſo little ſhame, that without further conſideration. ſhould by treaſon ſeeke to ſpill my innocent blood, which in ſo great a Prince as you, ſeemeth more odious then in any other, being by order of knighthode, bound to be vertuous, and abhorre all ſuch deteſtable actions, and to be an exãple to your ſubiects, leaſt againſt your ſelfe they might commit the like. Yet would I not for all my ſtate, you ſhoulde haue had ſuch confidence in mee, ſo to diſcouer my ſelfe, that I might (not knowing it) let your owne ſelfe, ſee your ſelfe confounded in your own imaginations. But ſeeing it is done, here you ſhall remaine in this Caſtel, till I further determin of your being. Yet for all this (ſaid Don Gallaneo) aſſure your perſon, for not farre hence is the remainder of my power, and eaſilie may you incurre ſome greater daunger, though your perſon be ſuch as I haue tried: yet among them are ſo fierce and mightie Giants, that will not thinke much to cleaue your bodie armed in two, with one blow. I haue thought (ſaid the Emperor) what in this caſe ſhall be done: and thereupon commanded his horſe and Don Brianels, to be ſadled. And Don Brianell foreſeeing the perill that might enſue, beſeeched the Emperour on his knees to giue him the order of Knighthood, to ſerue him in that enterprize: which the Emperour denied, promiſing to do it an other day. But here we leaue them, and returne to the Prince Don Bellianis, and Arſileo, whom we left with the Ladis in the Caue.

CHAP

CHAP. V.

Howe *Don Bellianis* with the Ladie departed from the Caue, and by what strange aduenture he and *Arsileo* were knighted.

IT is recorded by Friston, that the Prince Don Bellianis, with his Cosen Arsileo, remained ten dayes in the Damzels caue, till the Prince was able to trauaile, who greeuing much for the sorrowe the Emperour and Empresse would sustaine, and acknowledging how much bound he was to that Ladie, determined to depart, yet greatly desired to know the end of that aduenture. Wherefore the prince Arsileo, a day before their departure, intreated her to declare vnto them the whole occasion of her being in the Caue, and what she would require them to do in her seruice: although they needed not make many offers, being as they were so bound to her for so many fauors, that at her cõmand without intreaty, they ought to do, euen with the hazard of their liues. The damzell with a sorowfull countenance, as one that remembred her forepassed missortunes, could not withhold her teares, but with watry cheeks, & eies like flowing springs with rũning streams, at last thus began. I cannot (excellent Princes) so intirely expresse vnto you the cause of my griefe, as I could desire, for the great sorrow my greeued heart sustaines, suddenly suppressing me, & breaking into a salt shower of brinish teares, will not giue place vnto the exact vtterance of my wordes, yet as I may I will do it. I was (most noble Princes) daughter vnto Pompeiano, (not long since king of Antioch) and am called Aurora, that being at the Soldan of Babylons court, accompanying his daughter, the most beautifull Florisbella, whose perfected beauty, & absolute vertues, so far surpasseth al other of her time, as doth ỳ sun al lesser stars. To this court came a knight whose

name

name for a long time was not knowne, sauing by certaine Images in his shéld, was called the knight of the three images, who shewed himselfe so valiant, that there was no ten knights in the whole Court so strong and hardie, as durst maintaine the field against him. This knight throughout the Soldanes Empire, performed such déedes of haughtie prowesse, that in generall, among all men he was accounted a second Mars, and the Soldane did no lesse esteeme of him, allwayes hauing him in his companie, whereby he thought himselfe worthie of greater dignities, and so became amorous of the diuine Florisbella, for whose loue a long time he suffered great greefe and much solitude, not daring to manifest it to any: at length, saeing nothing preuaile to expell that desire, when one day the Soldane with all his Court was gone a hunting, he remained alone in the Pallace, and after some pleasant discourses, discouered vnto me the secrets of his loue, intreating me that in his name I would intreate the princesse to accept him for her knight, wherwith shee finding her selfe agreeued, answered that by no meanes she would do it, commanding him no more to imagine any such madnesse, least the Soldane her father should by chaunce heare thereof, which if he did, it might cost him little lesse then his life. But he nothing weighing this her answere, found meanes that the Princesse might know the extreame anguish of his perplexed heart, inthralled by her beautie, so that I thinking that some harme might thereby insue, declared it to the Soldane, who thereupon commaunded him to depart his Empire, but he not knowing the occasion, very heauily before his departure, told him that what he did was against reason, in commanding him to leaue his Dominions, for he was a prince able to shew him, that such as he ought not to be so vsed. And departing the Court towards the Soldane of Siconia, called the great Sophi of Persia, where suspecting I was cause of his exile, beganne with fire and sword to enter the king my fathers territories, in such sort wasting and spoyling them, that slaying the king, he tooke possession of the whole kingdome, giuing it

to the knight of the kindred called the Prince Don Galaneo, reputed a man of great valloz. In which time (not knowing of his succesſe) I went from the Soldanes Court home to my fathers, & fearing to fall in their hands, by counſell of a wiſe woman called Bellona, entred in a boate with theſe Damſels you here ſee, togither with the ſayde woman, and by hir direction arriued in this countrey, and was by her conducted to this caue, where ſhe bad me remain, foz I ſhould quickly be deliuered by the Prince of Greece, and his coſin of Hungarie, foztelling me euery thing that hitherto hath happened, and mozeouer ſhe bad me giue you armoz and hozſes, (which here ſhe left) wherwith you ſhall be knighted by a ſtrange aduenture, but what it it was ſhe would not tell. Thus haue I declared the occaſion of my being here: and the fearefull Beare the wiſe woman here left, was hither to bring the Prince Arſileo as you ſawe, and the mightie Giant which you ſlew, remayned keeper of the caue, who might not be ſlaine with any weapon but the ſwoz which you dzewe out of the Piller that hee guarded. So that (great Lozd) the remedie of my miſſoztune reſteth in your handes, and our departure may be when and ſo ſoone as you ſhall think good. I am content (anſwered he) wondrous amazed at the Damſels diſcourſe) but I would willingly take with me an hoaſt of men, that you may moze eaſily recouer your kingdome. I attend here no other hope but yours (ſayd ſhe) and as foz any other I was infozmed we ſhall not nede. Whereat the Prince (ſeeing that was her will commanded ſtraight pzouiſion to be made foz his departure: ſo al neceſſaries being ready, they mounted a hozſback, & the damſels on their palfraies, accompanied with the two anciẽt knights that carried ẏ armoz that the princeſſe Auroa had ſpoken of, which they ſeeing, toke it foꝛth of ẏ caſes, which were as appertained to nouel knights. The prince Don Belianis armoz was of colour Orange-tawny, with a ſea waue ſo big, that it ſeemed to ouerwhelme a ſhip there figured. In his ſheeld was pourtraide the picture of a moſt beautifull Lady, with a knight kneeling bezoze her, as if he craued mercie at her hands, from whom ſhe turned her face

in

in anger, with an inscription to this effect.

Let him die for so departing
At our first and sudden meeting:
Leauing thereby my deare sight dim
Of his, when I desired to see him.

Which was written in Arabian letters, that the Prince well vnderstood. The prince Arsileos wer murry, in ỹ midst wherof was fighting a griffon with a most terible dragon, which were parted by a damsel that made peace betwæn them, which when they saw so faire, became desirous to put them on, & causing the princesse and damsel to stay, were armed with them, which so wel fitted them, as if of purpose they had bæne forged for them, wherwith being armed, set forwards on their iourny, & hauing gone not far from the caue, spied before thẽ a faire Castle, which til then they had not seene, nor yet when they entred the cane. The princesse & the Ladies masked themselues, because ỹ heate of the sun was great, & the rest were disguised, that they might not be knowne, & approaching the Castle they saw two knights come forth therof, the one in a white armor like a nouell knight, the other that was bigger of personage, & seemed of great valor, was clad in the richest armor that might be sæne, of an azure colour, with many imperial crownes. In ỹ middle of his sheeld was figured the image of Mars, as the Pagans vse to picture him. These knights of the castle led with them a man on horseback vnbooted & vnspurde, and his head musled like a prisoner which made the prince desirous to know what they were. As God shal help me (said Arsileo) if I were knighted, I wold procure to know those knights, & why they leade ỹ knight prisoner. Do not therfore trouble your self (good cosin) said Don Bellianis, for easily may it be done, & so let it be my charge, for I wish God may neuer helpe me if straight we know it not, so going forward, they met a Squire that came to them, and sayd. Sir knights, my maister that is he in the white armor, desireth you by me, ỹ because hee receiued this day his order of knighthood, you would be content to breake a launce with him, for you seeming no lesse valiant then courteous, he desireth to trie if your

deedes do agree with your outward appearance. Tell him (replyed Don Bellianis) wee would willingly accomplish his desire, were we but knighted, and would gladly receiue such order at the Grecian Emperours handes, for this and no other cause letteth vs from fulfilling his minde. And you may also tel him (sayd Arsileo) that were it not for that, it should be commanded him to yeeld vs account of that knight what he is, and why they lead him prisoner. The Page returned to his maister and tolde him that answere, which he reputed too great arrogancie in them, but seeing they expected his answere, he went to them, and somewhat cholericke he saide. Which of you is the knight that gaue my page so proude an answere? You should not neede to aske it (said Arsileo) were we knighted, desiring nothing more then to satisfie your request, but seeing sayd the knight) you go to require that order at the Emperour Bellaneos hands, to saue you that labour, I assure you he is not at Constantinople, nor of him is there any newes, and therefore know that yonder knight is such a Prince, both in possessions and valour, as the Emperour little surpasseth him, wherefore that our Combat may be effected, you may receiue the order you seeke of him, although it were to no other end then to chastise the madnesse that possesseth you (replyed Don Bellianis) we wil now receiue that sacred order, & calling one of the damsels, sent hir in their names to the knight in the azure armour, who going where hee was, thus sayde. The knights you see with yon Ladyes (noble Sir) intreat you, seeing they expected the order of armes at the hands of the Emperour of Greece, whom your companion saith is absent from Constantinople, and they supposing you no lesse noble then valiant in outward shew, to grace them with the sayde order, that they might satisfie your companion with the breaking of some few launces, certifying you that without scruple you may do it, for they bee both of royall bloud, I am right gladde to do it (answered hee) though it were better they receiued it by the Emperour, with those ceremonious rights as such honour requireth, but seeing

they

they are thus content it shall be, and so meeting each other with such kind greetings and salutations, as if they knew the consanguinitie betweene them, and the Princes requested the knight again to accomplish their request, they all alighted, and he taking their oathes, were knighted, & the princesse Aurora girded Don Beliani with his sword, whilst the nouell knight did the like to Arsileo: which done, they rested so content, as they were created the greatest Lords of the world, and the knight imbracing them, sayde. I pray God faire knights that in all things you may attaine no lesse honour then the royall state of your descent doth require: to whom they rendered great thanks, for this his kind benediction, and mounted againe on horseback.

CHAP VI.

The braue and dangerous fight betweene the two Princes and the knights of the Castle.

After the knights were all on horsebacke mounted, hee in the white armor inraged with kindled wrath of desired reuenge against Arsileo, for the arrogant words he had sent him, that with animated courage proceeded from a valiant hart, said to him. Sir knight, if with weapons you dare defend your proude answers sent me by my page, now haue you time to do it. Arsileo hearing this, & being no lesse furious thē he, answered neuer a word, but turned his horse, and taking so much field as would suffice for his carryer, couched his launce against his aduersary, who with no lesse furie met him in the middle of their course, incountering so rigorously, that their launces flew in small peeces, and meeting with their bodies, the knight of the Castle fel downe ouer his horse crupper: the like happened to Arsileo, but that he fell on his feet, with the saddle betweene his legs, for by the strong incounter his girts broke, so that both astonished at this chance, sayde

layde hands to their well cutting swordes, and ioyning one to the other, stroke so strong and mightie blows on their wel tempered helmes, that it caused great feare in their companies, each doubting the losse of their friend, for they wounded one another with admirable strength, extreamly dangering their flesh, cutting their armor, byrsing thẽselues, spilling their blood in great abundance, yet the knight of the Castell was worse wounded by reason of the good armor Arsileo wore, and being the valiantest knight (next don Bellianis) in those daies. But the knight of the castel, with the desire he had to ouercome his aduersarie, nothing regarded his woumds: wherfore he in the azure armor, being skilfuller in such matters, plainly perceiued, ỳ if he gaue not ouer, he either woulde remaine vanquished, or slaine, yet knew he not how to remedy it, nor how to forbid it, which made him storme like a Lion, seeing no means to prcuent the danger like to befall his friend. On the other side, Don Bellianis viewing the cruell fight, and though he saw Arsileo more couragiously double his blowes, yet greatly feared the euent therof, seeing with what nimblenesse the other fought. And considering how he might prcuent his feare, stepped to the Princesse Aurora, and craued of her leaue to proue himselfe with the knight in the azure armor, that he might thereby aide the prince Arsileo, if he shuld be put to any disaduãtage. The princesse though vnwilling, cõdiscended, seeing the necessitie of the case required. Wherupon he went to the knight in blew, & said. Although valiant sir, it may seem discurtesie (hauing no occasion to prouoke vs to fight) yet the necessitie of our companions moues vs vnto it, & vrgeth me now to craue the breaking of a launce with you, whiles the combat dureth, if you please. It doth please me (replied the knight of the Castell) with this prcmise, that either of vs may helpe his fellow in his nẽd. The Prince that nothing else wished, was exceedingly content thereof. And so both take that part of the field that they thought meet for their incoũters, ran one against the other, their launces couched in their rests, and met so furiously, that the shiuers of their speares flew vp-

into

into the aire out of sight, yet moued one another no more then had they run against a tower: which greatly amazed the knight of the Castel, hauing hitherto ouerthrowne to the earth all that euer he iousted with. And so with raging furie returned vpon Don Bellianis, ý also made towards him, who before he could defend himselfe with his sheild, receiued so strong a blow, that it made him leane his head on his horses necke, leauing him so astonied, that whē the Princesse saw it, she was surprised with a colde sweat ouer all her bodie, and doubling another on him, the Prince lifted vp his sheeld, which was throwne quite to the ground, but in two, that the fine tēper wherwith the wise Bellona did forge it, nothing prouailed against the neuer cōquered arm of that most valiant knight. But hereat don Bellianis feeling himselfe so handled, stroke the knight on his helme, that he supposed the whole waight of some tower had fallē theron, and the blow lighted with such mightie strength, that it had almost throwne him down, yet the horse by ý force thereof, was forced to set his knees on the ground, & his helm with his armed headpeece vnder it, were both cut, & the furious sword which resting there, descended downwards on the horse, ý al his capparizons made of hardest steel were cut. The imprisoned knight seeing so great a blow, cried out & said. I cānot beleeue that valiant Hector, terror to ý Greeks, with al his admirable forces could haue giuen the like blow, and now yon knight hath found his match. But they amazed at each others strength, hauing againe met, bestowed on thēselues such terrible strokes, that their armor being rent in many places, were grieuously wounded, & the knight of the castel turning towards his fellow, saw he was so weake, through the much blood he had lost, ý greatly pitying him, with new courage redoubled his blowes on his aduersarie, yet al his toile litle auailed him, for Don Bellianis seeing this was the first battell that euer he fought, & greeuing that the other knight should so long withstand him, hauing indured 3. houres fight, and lost his sheeld, and feeling himself wounded in many places, toke his sword with both handes, stretching himselfe on his stirrops, thinking to end the battell with that sole blow: but the

knight

knight of the Castell, being verie circumspect in such matters, made shew to await him, couering himselfe verie well with his sheeld, and seeing the blow came right downward on his head, closed betweene his armes, that he coulde not strike him, saue only with his sword hilts, which was so mightily, that he could not for a while feele himselfe: and with the strength thereof the sword fel out of his hands, hanging at his arme by a litle chain. The knight in the closing wounded him on the arme with a thrust (which resisted by the armour, ran betweene the harnesse and his elbow, making him no little wound. And Don Bellianis seeing him so nigh, toke him betweene his armes, and spurring his horse, hoysted him verie lightly from his saddle: the knight likewise getting holde of him, so long strugled together, that both came to the ground, almost hanging one foote in the stirrop, & brauely holding togither, striued to ouerthrow each other, not daring to lose their holde, so greatly they feared the ouermatched strength of one another. While they were thus in this strife, from out the thickest of the wood, they espied the number of thirtie knights, and foure Giants, who seeing the knight in the Azure armour in such danger, all spurred agaynst Don Bellianis, not regarding the outcries of the imprisoned knight, that said they should not hurt him. But he had bin slaine if they had not feared to harme the knight in the Azure armor: who losing the other, and seeing his horse nigh him (though hee were greatly wounded) mounted thereon, with setting his foote on the stirrop, with such agilitie, that he made them all maruell, and as one that had done nothing all that day, with a valiaunt courage, he rushed in among those knights, and at three blows he slue three. The Prince Arsileo, at this time, hauing withdrawne himselfe to breath, seeing his companion in such daunger, not looking to his aduersarie, leapt on his horse: so did the two olde knights that with the Princesse came, but all of them might little preuaile against the furious multitude, with the knights of the Castell also, that prepared themselues to ayde them. Here declareth Friston, that the two first knights of

Thessalie,

the Caſtell were, the Emperor Don Bellaneo, that had knighted Don Brianell, which was he that fought with Arſileo, hauing armed himſelf with Don Gallaneos armor, & ſetting him on horſback (as you haue heard) meaning to conuey himſelfe to Conſtantinople, the better to paſſe vnknowne through his knights, that were they that aſſailed the princes, imagining the Emperor to be Don Gallaneo, and therfore ſo furiouſly aſſaulted them as is expreſſed. But the Emperor fearing that Don Gallaneo (hauing that opportunitie to effect his determination) would diſcouer himſelf to his knights, called to him one of thoſe men that came from the Caſtell, and commanded him with all ſpæd poſſible, to haſte him to Conſtantinople, and tell the king of Hungarie, in what neceſſitie hee left him, telling him his name, which till that time he had not diſcouered to any of the Caſtell. And putting off his Gantlet, gaue him his royall ſeale at Armes, which the King verie well knewe, commaunding him he ſhould with all ſpæde returne. The man greatlie amazed, toke the Signet, and haſted him to Conſtantinople, ſtaying nothing by the way, and in ſhort time arriued in the Cittie, which was ſome fiue leagues diſtant from the Caſtell, and demaunded for the King of Hungaries Pallace. It was tolde him that hee was in the Empereurs Court, whither hee ſtraight wayes went, and finding him, kneeled before him halfe ſpeechleſſe, and diſmayed, tolde him in what neceſſitie hee had left the Emperour, whereat the King greatlie amazed, tooke the King, and ſaying nothing to the Empreſſe, commaunded the guarde which continualie was in the Pallace, being aboue two thouſand knights, to beginne to march towardes the Caſtell, commaunding alſo the whole Cittie to arme it ſelfe, and follow him, which fearing ſome ſuddaine treaſon to bee at hande, rayſed ſo great tumult of armour through all the ſame, that the inhabitants ſtyed into an vproare, as if with enemies it had beene beſieged. And ſo though the common people knewe the preſent neceſſitie required ſpædie haſte, were somewhat long or

they set foorth. And in their way we leaue them, till we haue shewen what in the meane season befell the Emperour, and the Princes.

CHAP. VII.

The ende of the fight betweene the Emperour and Princes, against Don Gallaneo and his men.

So soone as the Emperour had dispatched the Messenger to Constantinople, he determined to ayde the Knights, that maintained a terrible battell with the Giants, and their troupes, beeing most cruellie wounded, by reason of the remorcelesse forces of those pitilesse fiends, the Prince Don Bellaneo, seeing his Knightes were deceyued, with great outcries vncouering his face, called to them, who when they heard his voice, & saw his face, straight knew him, greatly amazed at such a chaunce, and leauing their fight against the Princes ranne to imbrace him, not knowing the cause why that Knight should be then armed with his armour. And though the Emperour see him go towardes them, yet could he not stay him. And Don Gallaneo seeing that opportunitie which Fortune offered him, and not minding to spende his time in speeches with his men, sayde. Nowe is it requisite (oh Knights) that you reuenge mee on him that weareth my armour. For knowe, if you take him, or slay him, our enterprice therewith is ended, for he is the Emperour of Constantinople, whom we came from far Countries to seeke, beeing hee that hath slaine my Knights, and take mee prisoner, vsing me as you haue seene. The Knights that aymed at no other marke, togither in a troupe set vpon the Emperour, and Don Brianell of Macedon, that was with him. But when Don Bellianis, and Arsileo heard that he was the

Emperour

Emperour his Father, greatly grieued, for what with him befell them, and with eager furie they set vpon those traiterous Knights. But those damned Giants that came before the rest opposed themselues against them, striking strong and mightie blowes. And one of them raysing aloft a huge iron mace betweene his handes, stroke the Emperour therewith, that if hee had not warded it on his shælde, it had shiuered his head in peeces: yet it rested not there, but descenced on his horses necke, felling him deade to the ground, with his master on his backe. The Emperour for all this, stroke him on both his armes, that he threwe them to the earth, with the mace betweene them

Nowe heere was the Emperour in great daunger of his life. For when his horse fell, he toke one of his legges vnder him, and don Gallaneo, that had alreadie put on one of the dead Knightes armour, comming thither at that time with two other Giants, all the three alighted from theyr Horses, intending there to strike off his head. The Prince don Bellianis that sawe his father in that extremitie, dismounting in all haste, went to succour him, but ere hee came, don Gallaneo (as hee whome his death woulde highlie aduauntage) wounded him on the head, and the two Giants with their Maces raised aloft, with mightie strength woulde discharge them on his heade: so that he for that time not able to drawe him from vnder his horse, with one blow ouerthrewe don Gallaneo, cutting asunder his shæld and helme, and greeuously wounded him on the head. And being about to auoyde those Giants blowes, could by no meanes shunne them, but both discharging their hellish furie on his heade, made him bowe to the earth, and so staggard him that hee coulde scarce stande. And though the spacious worlde contained not his like for admirable strength, yet with seeing his Father in that case, and himselfe so handled by such infernall Monsters, glorying in nothing but in bloudie crueltie, abhorring all good and decent order of equall Martiall discipline, so

doubled his vndaunted courage in himselfe, stroke at one of the Giants heades, who thinking to defende it by crossing his Mace ouer his Helme, had it cutte cleane in two, hard by the handle, and the furious Sword lighted on the horse gyrts that lay on the Emperour, that cutting them of on both sides, hee gaue his Father libertie to drawe his legge away, pushing the Horse from him quickelie, arose yet verie wearie. And seeing howe Don Bellianis with one side, howe hee reached one of the deformed Giants with great strength vpon his thigh, he felled him to the ground, and howe with another hee maintained a hote fight. And hee also sawe that Don Brianell and Arsileo, with eight Knights that came out of the Castell to succour them, were in a fierce battell with the other Giant and Knights. And that Arsileo being busied with the Giant, the other Knightes being in number greatlie inferiour to their enemies, were by them put to the worse: wherefore the Emperour went to ayde them: but ere he arriued, the Giant and Arsileo, hauing closed, dismounted each other, that the Giant leauing his foote in the stirrop, Arsileo spurred his Horse backewarde, making him runne away, and dragge his master after him, who within a while breathed his last. And so he turned with the Emperour courageously to helpe their companions, and arriued when their aduersaries were little able to make them longer resistaunce, specially because don Bellianis had slaine the other Giant: At which instant arriuing where he was, scarce tenne of them remained with life, which to saue themselues fledde into the woddes. Whereupon they alighted (not minding to pursue them) to binde their woundes. But scant had the Emperour time to render due thankes for their great helpe, much admiring they? exceeding valour, when the rest of don Gallaneos Knightes issued from the thickest of the Groue, who being aduertised of the successe of their enterprise, and not of their losse, came in great haste to participate of the glorie they should obtaine by the Emperours death.

Before

Before them came those sterne and vgly Giants, with their launces seeming huge pine trees, with such tempestous furie, that they had not leysure to bind their deepe wounds. Great was the sorrow the Emperour hereby sustained, seeing the stay of the King of Hungarie. But as neither hee nor the other knights could by death-seeming terror be daunted, with a courragious heart thus he saide. Now is the time (braue knights) that you must shew ỹ magnanimitie of your inuincible minds, since in your first aduenture fortune hath so directed you, that the glorie of the forepassed worthies by the victorie of this one battell shall be extinguished, though herein we yeeld the tribute of our liues to al-conquering death, which being naturall to all men, should least be feared. But in the omnipotent powers of him that this circled vniuerse did frame, do I trust he will not permit the valour of such knights in such short time to perish, but so stregthen them, that the perpetuall fame of their royall acts may remaine eternized to all succeeding ages. Little neede we to be incouraged to suffer the fearefull stroke of death (replied Arsileo) for where the person of so victorious an emperor is indangered, ours can be but the least of all most little losses. I thought no lesse (answered the Emperour, but I will speake it, that my selfe imitating your valour might incourage my decaying courage by your discreete replie, by which since I perceiue you rested vndaunted, and animated against insuing daungers, it behoued vs, least we be suddainely assaulted and ouerthrowne with their horses, which greatly might hazard vs, that wee take before vs yon knight that lyeth vppon the grounde (meaning Don Galaneo, that verie sorely wounded lay without his helme) for these that towards vs come bee his men, and fearing to hurt him, wil not molest vs with their horses. This will be very good (sayde Don Bellianis) as also that one of these knights speedily conduct these Ladies into the castle, for I do more regard their safetie, then I esteeme my owne life. So effecting all things, they on foote expected the comming of the Giants and knights, which were aboue 500. in number,

who approaching, were greatly amazed to see that slaughter of knights and Giants, which if their knights that fled had not told them of, they would not haue beleeued it. Hereupon two of the formost Giants with a cosin of Don Gallaneo called Don Galfeo the vnknown, thinking to ouerrun them with their horses, perceiued they defended themselues with don Gallaneo: wherfore they commanded all their knights to alight on foote, which they would by no means do, because they saw comming from the citie a great troupe of knights, which so soone arriued, as had they alighted, with little trouble they had al bin slain, yet notwithstanding some ten of them dismounted together, making account to end ỹ fight with the emperors death, while the rest went against the knights ỹ from the citie marched: for being in a strange land, they reputed euerie one their enemie. But the King of Hungary that was he which came with ỹ knights in such extreame, foreseeing the danger like to insue, cõmanded his men to wheele about to the further side, compassing so much field, that with safetie they might arriue where the Emperour and the other Knights were combatting, fearing that if they should encounter with their enemies, the Emperour might in the meane time bee slaine, and their haste and ayde come in vaine: the Knights being all chosen and valiaunt, such as continually guarded the Emperours person, and sufficient euerie one to be a cõmander of many, took their compasse in such maner, that without turning their backs, or on their aduersaries breaking their lances, fel on the sudden where the emperor and Princes were, whõ they found fighting like angered lions, for that Don Bryanell was pitiously wounded by two giants, and by them beaten to the ground, so that the Emperor & Don Belianis to defend him, bestirred themselues so bravely against them, esteeming them but as two common knights. On the other side the Prince Arsileo kneeled with his knee on the ground, for one of the Giants had thrust him quite through the thigh. But when the King of Hungarie arriued with his men, hee alighted with some twentie knights, leauing

the

the reſt in fight with their aduerſaries, whereof ſome bee-
ing rounde begirt with Grecians, the others ſette themſelues againſt don Bellianis, ſeeing hee was the ſole cauſer of their vtter ruine, and notwithſtanding his mighty blowes two of thoſe Giants cloſed with him: but hee not diſmaide there-with, layde hand on his dagger, which at his backe conti-nually hee woꝛe, and ſtabbed it in the Gyants backe that held him betwirt his armes: which done with mighty ſtrength it ran thꝛough his body to the hilts. Which was not ſo ſpeedi-ly perfoꝛmed, but the other wounded him greeuouſlie, that his armour being in thꝛee places rent, and his fleſh in many bꝛuſed and cutte, and ſeeing himſelfe in ſuch notoꝛious perill, toke the heauy boyſtrous Giant in his armes, & with his puiſſant foꝛces hoyſted him aloft, and with a mightie fall tumbled him to the earth, where pꝛeſently he chopt off his head: which done, tur-ning to the emperoꝛ, he ſaw him cloſe with another Giant, and fearing ſome ſiniſter hap might befall him thꝛough the much bloud iſſu ng from his wounds, whereat the Pꝛince greatlie wondered how he could ſtand on foote, ſtroke the Gyant ſuch a blow on the legge, that hee ſundered it quite from the bo-dy. All which notwithſtanding, ſeeing the number of the knights ſtill increaſe vpon them, and that the trampling of the hoꝛſes might greatly indanger them, & doubting that the empe-roꝛ becauſe he had loſt much bloud, would not be able to mount a hoꝛſback, toke him in his armes, & ſet him on the giants hoꝛſe he laſt ſlue. The like did hee to the Pꝛince Arſileo, that thꝛough the wounde on his thigh could not doo it himſelfe: and greatly eſteeming Don Bryanell foꝛ that hee hadde ſeene him that day doo, and becauſe hee came in his Fathers companye, hee tooke him from the ground, and commaun-ded a knight to conuay him to the Caſtle, there to applie him ſuch remedies as that hee might recouer his loſt ſenſes. And nowe at the laſt, when hee would get a hoꝛſe foꝛ himſelfe, could not ſo eaſily compaſſe it, foꝛ all the reſt of the knights hadde turned themſelues with a helliſh furie vpon him, where

he

he was like to be slaine outright, for Don Galfeo hauing vanquished the Empereurs men, sette on him, wounding him with cruell and remorseleſſe blowes. But finding himselfe incompassed with death, began to strike on euery side, that vnhappie was hee on whom any lighted, for so fearefull and deadly they were, that with fiue blowes he stroke down three knights and two Giants, & seeing Don Galfeo was hee that most molested him, stroke at his leg with such strength, that had the sword fallen with the edge downeright, it had cutte it cleane off, yet it rased away all his armour there, and seeing him within his reach, plucked his sheelde out of his hande, and with it beate him to the grounde from himselfe and so none daring molest him, without setting foote on stirrop, hee mounted on Don Galfeos horse. At this time hither came the Emperour, that seeing him so nimbly mounted, being so sorely wounded, was so amazed, that he hardly beleeued what his eyes beheelde, and that which he most admired, was to see him so fierce and couragious in this first aduenture that euer happened him. And emulating his valiant deedes, hee followed him as if he were his teacher, and hee his pupill, to whom Don Belianis being nigh him, sayde. Me thinks Syr knight our men begin to lose the field: so think I, answered the Emperour, and calling Arsileo, ioyned all three together with the King of Hungarie, that was in the vauntguard, animating his fainting knights, that with fresh courage so gallantly returned to the fight, as if at that present they began, giuing and receiuing most terrible blowes of those helburned Giants. But Don Belianis seeing the wonders the Emperour his Father had performed, imagining his owne actes none in comparison of his, with such vehement rigour hee assaulted his foes, that his men regained their lost aduantage. About this time Don Galfeo arose from his traunce, and seeing his knights retyred backe, and that the most parte of the Giants were slaine, and that great troupes of armed knights, not farre from whence they were fighting,

came

came with spædie haste towards them, which he iudged to bee aboue two thousand, and seeing his intent coulde not for that time take effect, turned to Don Gallaneo, that daye by him, and taking one of those horses that lose came about, called one of his Knights, commaunding him to set the Prince his Cozin before him, very secretly, vnknowne to the Emperour, and the rest, he put himselfe through the grone, and learning of a man whom he met, the next way to the sea coaste, went thither, where finding his ships, and fearing he might be pursued, stripped himselfe and Don Galleneo, commanding the marriners to hoyse the sayles, and put vnto the Sea: which they straight did, laying his Cozin on a bed in his Cabbin, and applyed him many remedies, to recouer his sences, that the better they might dresse his woundes: where we leaue them, returning to declare the ende, and successe of the battell.

CHAP. VIII.

How the battell beeing ended, Don Bellianis, with his companye departed, not discouering whome they were, And what happened to him and his Coozin, with the Ladies, in the daungerous groue.

THe battell resting in the manner as is before recyted, very cruell and bloodye on all parts, the like whereof to that day was neuer seene of so fewe Knights, the one side reselued to effect theyr enterprise, which by the victorie of that battell they hoped would be by the Emperours death: drewe strength whence none was, iudging better in that fight to dye well, reuenging their owne deathes, then to abide the mercye of the Emperour, of whom

they none expected. On the other side, the Emperours knights being of such valour as is expressed, and guided by such Captaines, fought so courageously with their aduersaries, that forcing them to retire, most of them left their liues in the field. About this time appeared, along the way from the Cittie, so manie squadrons of knights that they couered all those fieldes, kæping no order in their march, gallopping so fast that quickely they arriued where that vnequall battell was fighting: who being by the Pagans scene, straight put themselues to flight, thinking to saue themselues in the Thickets of those woddes. But the Emperours knights then arriuing, so brauely assaulted them, that hauing no time to execute their purpose, they were all put to the Swoorde, none suruiuing to beare newes home of their ouerthrowe. The Emperours and Princes remained so wounded, that although the ioy of their great victorie eased the paine of their woundes, yet thought they coulde not scape with life, for the quantitie of bloud issued from them, was so great, that their Horses were altogither besmeared therewith. But the Emperour seeing howe much bound hee was to those knightes, with great gladnesse ranne to embrace Don Bellianis, whom he so much prized for his hautie chiualrie, that he iudged all others in comparison of his but a dreame. The Prince Don Bellianis did the like: and going to dismounte on foote, to shewe his humble dutie, the Emperour woulde not permit it, but holding him in his armes said.

If (most excellent knight) you regarde what you haue done for mee, and from what great daunger you and your Companions haue this day redeemed me, more reason were it I should kisse your hande, in signe of acknowledging the great benefite by your magnanimitie that I haue receyued, which no lesse then with my life I shoulde remunerate: in satisfaction whereof, I pray the Almightie Lord that hath deliuered vs from so great daunger and perill, to guerdon you for it: for if I should inuest your Lord of all my Emperie,

you

you could not rest satisfied for the least part of your deserued merits this day obtained. Wherefore, henceforth I will holde this Monarchie, not as absolute commaunder thereof, but as giuen me by your hands, and as your deputie to kep it, acknowledging my lawfull homage for the same, at al times when you shall commaund.

The Prince Arsileo comming thither at that instant, not letting don Bellianis aunswere the Emperour, least thereby he might be knowne, beeing loath to discouer themselues, by reason of their promise made to the Damzels, thus replied. What to day this Knight hath in your seruice done, (most mightie Emperour) deserueth no recompence, nor yet wordes of ceremonious thankes, for more then this, euerie one (knowing the royaltie of your person) is bound vnto, and nowe we resting more then satisfied, with the good will wherewith you seeme to accept this our small seruice, and hauing no more neede of vs at this present, wee instantly beseech you, to graunt vs leaue, that sending for our Damzels, wee may hence depart, for our abiding here may be verie daungerous vnto vs.

In verie deede (victorious Knight) I tell you (replied the Emperour) there is now a greater battell represented me, then the last: For I cannot beleeue in Knightes so magnanimous in heroycall deeds, there should be such discourtesie, as to depart, leauing on me the burthen of ingratitude, in making me suffer you to go so grieuously wounded, when your deserts merit no satisfaction, and that which most tormenteth me, is, you should desire to depart, not reuealing vnto me your names, that at least I might know to whom my thankes are due. And you most excellent knight (turning to don Bellianis) do I intreat to do it, which if you also denie mee, I here protest to follow you about the worlde, till I learne it, and ioyning it to the enterprise, I haue vndertaken in demaund of my sonne *don Bel*hanis, and of his Cosin Arsileo, I will not returne to Constantinople, till I also know this I now request of you.

Don Bellianis fearing to be knowne, altered his ſpeech, and anſwered: I cannot but confeſſe the high diſcourteſie that we commit (moſt glorious Emperour) in diſobeying the ſupreme command of ſo great a Monarch, whoſe immortal fame deſerueth the whole earths, (and chiefly our obedience.) But men being ſubiect, voluntarily to promiſe, and tyed by neceſſitie to obſeruance, forceth vs by diſobeying you, to obſerue our fore-paſſed worde to one of the Ladies that bee within the Caſtle, which was not to diſcouer our ſelues to any, vntill we were out of your Empire, leaſt thereby we ſhoulde bee deteyned. And as for the demaund you vndertake of the Princes your ſonne and Cozin, you may account it ended, for they be liuing and not long agoe were before this Caſtle, whome I and this my companion haue ſeene togither: and this we aſſure you to be true, becauſe we know them very wel, and alſo they told vs, how being on hunting, they were by a certain aduenture, parted from you and your traine in the daungerous groue, which is far from hence. Wherfore, in lieu of this promiſe and newes we intreat you any longer not to ſtaye vs, nor further to enquire of our affaires, nor names, ſeeing it lyeth not in our powers to declare.

The Emperour being about to reply, the king of Hungary came to them that returned from purſuing his enemies, to whom the Emperor ſaid: it behoueth you king of Hungary to conſtraine theſe knights to abide with vs, for I cannot intreat it: They will not do ſo I am ſure (anſwered the king) eſpecially at your requeſt. I ſay I cannot obtaine it, ſaid the Emperour, yet haue they tolde mee newes of my ſonne, and yours, and that it is not long ſince they departed away from them, and for all this will they not tell me they're names. They are altogither ſo vnworthy to be knowne ſayd, Arſileo, that it is vnneceſſarie to require them. But if it may pleaſe your Maieſtie, we would gladly knowe the cauſe wherefore theſe Knights would haue ſlaine you, though in the beginning, me thought they ment it by vs.

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The Emperour thereupon told them the whole occasion, as is alreadie mentioned, at which instant the Princesse Aurora comming thither with her Ladyes, and hearing the Emperor name Don Galaneo, said to Don Belianis. The greatest part of our enterprise (Sir knight) were finished, if that traitor were taken. Whereupon they commaunded him to be sought for about all the field, but could not finde him, yet in the search they met the man that directed Don Galfeo to the sea coast: of whome by the signes and tokens of their armor, they learned that they had fled from the battell, whereof the Emperour was exceedingly sorie, to whom Don Belianis thus spake. Afflict not your selfe (dread Lord) about him, for it is the enterprise I undergo by this Ladies commaund, and if I liue, I protest and promise you, that the first time he falles into my hands (though he be before the Soldane his Lorde) to giue him his death. I would not haue you take such paines (sayde the Emperor) but ouerpassing that, lette mee againe intreate you to stay the curing of your woundes in this Castle. Wee may heere abide no longer (replyed Don Belianis, and so taking their leaues, (the Prince sending for his sheeld, which was brought him in two peeces) they straight departed, so sorely wounded as may be imagined, for he that had leaft of them both, hadde aboue twentie verie dangerous wounds, cheefely that which Artileo had on his thigh, and the thrust that Don Belianis had, which seemed to penetrate his entrails. In this maner going on their way the space of three miles, ascended a high mountaine, to find some place to dresse their woundes, and hauing cut and gathered a great number of branches and boughes, the damsels made some arbours for the knights, hauing left behind the two olde men, with many others: for seeing them fall from their horses, supposed them slaine in the fight, and with their gownes, towels, and scarfes, couered them, and after they had vnarmed them, with such things as they had dressed their woundes, which were so deepe and dangerous, that they greatly lamented, certainely thinking they could not scape death.

And leauing them alone to repose their wearied bodies, told it their Lady, who bitterlie wept for their peril, as if she had seene them dead, so much shee credited her Damsels words, knowing their skill in that misterie to be singular. But being thus in their laments, they sawe a chariot comming through the ayre, which seemed to be made of white transparant Christall of the mount: it was drawne with six mightie vgly Griffons that put the Princesse and her Ladies in great feare: which chariot alighted in the place where the knights lay. From it descended two very little dwarffes that were going to the Prince Don Bellianis with a chearefull voice, & said. We are messengers sent from the wise Bellona, who for the great loue she beareth you and the Prince your Cozin, knowing in what daunger your liues be in, and how nigh death approacheth, to craue his tributary dutie, by reason of your great wounds, (for although these Ladies be very skilfull in this art, yet you cannot without great daunger be cured, vnlesse that it bee by her, & also because the Emperours men are seeking for you, and will not be long ere they come hither, she hath sent you this carre: in which she requires you, that without longer delay, both you with the Princesse and her ladies, mount speedily thereon, for that the Emperour hath straight neede of the selfesame remedie, and in dalliance he may incurre much peril of his life. Whereuppon they seeing that more then the present danger could not happen vnto them, that agreede thereto, and taking the Princesse & her Ladies, they all mounted on the charyot, though the Ladies with some fear did it. But ere we more speak of them, we must remember what befell the Emperour after the battell was ended.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

What the Emperour did after the Princes departure: and how he knew who they were.

Done after the Emperor saw the aduenture ended to his high honor, he rendred immortall thanks to the almightie for his deliuerie, and with the newes he had of his deere son Cæzin, nothing regarded his woundes. Whereupon the king of Hungaria said: haue a care dread Soueraigne to cure your wounds, if you will inioy the victory you haue atchieued, for it wil be no small thing to escape with life, being so piteously wounded. My ioy is so great, answered the Emperor, that were it not moderated with seeing these Knights go with such daungerous woundes, in my defence and deliuerie from this daies perill, that onely were a sufficient remedie to heale me without further cure. But beleeue me: if (as I hope) I doo escape this daunger, recouering my almost lost life, I will not desist till by some meanes I know who and whence they be, that so well reuenged me: and commaunding all the wounded to be conuaide to the Cittie, he returned to the Castle, leauing the king of Hungaria to make prouision of all necessaries, and himselfe was laid in his bed: where his woundes being dressed, his surgions thought impossible he should without great hazard of his life escape them. Whereat the people sorely greeued, cheefely seeing that a while after he was dressed, through the intollerable paine of the woūd on his head, he spake many things without reason, as a man distract of sence, and halfe lunatick, which was iudged as tokens of his death, so that none dared to cary any such tidings to Cōstantinople. But thus fearing his vntimely end, there came a damsel to the king of Hungary, that hauing caused the woūded knights to be conducted to be cured, rested greatly discontent for the Emperors daunger, and with a merrie semblance said to him. Doo not greeue (most noble King) for the howre is not come, that so royall and most glorious a Prince

should

should thus suddenly leaue the world, therfore lead me straight vnto his presence, and you shall see wonders by me wrought. The amazed King replying neuer a worde, toke her by the hand, and brought her to the Castell, and set her in the Chamber where the Emperour lay in the state afore recited, more like a dead then a liuing creature. The Damzell in the entring drew forth of a little boxe certaine Oyntments that she brought with her, wherewith the Emperour lying in a traunce, receyued his vitall senses, and with a faint voyce said. O mightie sauiour of the worlde, I do beseech thee, if so it may please thy high omnipotencie, not to take this transitorie life from mee, before I haue seene my deare, deare sonne, that in the end of my pilgrimage, I may with comfort die. You shall not yet die (said the Damzell) therefore strengthen your selfe, for you must ere you die suffer manie perils, ordained by the diuine power of the highest Lord. And if your heart will serue to drinke this potion I bring, you shall presently bee restored to your former healthy: and feare not to drinke it, for I come from those knights that ayded you. So drawing forth a litle Glasse, wherin was a certaine composition so odoriferous, that the Emperour and all that were present, were greatly comforted with the smell, the Emperour taking it in his hand, feareles drunke it off. And at that instant hee felt himselfe so well, as hee had neuer beene wounded, or ill at all. And rising to thanke her, shee went the way she came, and commaunded the King of Hungarie to kill her, who astonished at the Emperours suddaine recouerie, knewe not whether he slept or waked: but following her, shee stayed him, and sayde. Tire not your selfe (renowmed King of Hungarie) in seeking me, for all the worlde is not sufficient to finde me. But know thou, the Emperour was ayded by the nearest kinsman he and you haue, wherewith shee flang away so swiftly, that she seemed to outstrip the winde, and suddenlie vanished out of sight.

And here the Historie declareth, this was the sage Belona, who greatly tendering the loue of Don Bellianis, did for his

his sake so cure the Emperour, for otherwise his death had bin sorer then his life. The king of Hungary amazed with these thinges, as also (knowing in what danger the Emperour had beene in) to see him now come forth of his chamber, demanded him what was become of the Lady. To whom he told all that had passed, & what she said. I cānot thinke (thē replyed the Emperour) whome those so vailant knights may bee, hauing my selfe knighted them. Trust me not (answered the king) if they were not our losse Sonnes, for wee haue no nigher kinsmen, and your knighting them, assureth it to bee true, as also the newes themselues told you. Who can beleeue (said the Emperour) that if they were them, they would so departe from me, & wherefore I will haue all these men seperate themselues, to seeke them about the forrest, for being wounded, they cannot be farre gone, and somewhere they may be alighted to binde their woundes. So commaunding all the knights to doe it, they went to visit the Prince don Brianell, hauing heard hee was in no lesse danger then the Emperour: and going into his chamber, they neither found him nor any signe of him, but vpon his Beds head they found a letter, written in Greeke, to this effect.

This is meant by the Prophecie in the 2. booke, & 7. Chap.

In the time to come that the braue Lyon of the house of Grecia shall bee put in greater danger, by the vnknowne Lyon defendor of his royall blood, shall also by the Orientall hats, through the meanes of their vniust Prince, be put in greater perill then the last, whereof by him hee was deliuered, wherein all the power of my knowledge shall bee tryed, the most parte of them beeing absent. And thou great Emperour that this readest, desiste from the demand of thy sonne and Knights, and by no meanes put thy selfe in their quest, for thy Empire will greatly need thee (though not so soone. This I write thee, that thou

mayst knowe, the fame of thy glorious deedes will bee extinguished by the light of the new knight, to thy greater eternitie. Therefore doe no otherwise then this my letter requireth thee, for I wish all thine affaires may succeede according to thy owne desires, which goodwill the present remedie thou didst receiue by my damzell well doth approoue.

The Emperour hauing read the letter, rested greatly confused therewith, and turning to the King, said. What thinke you we may doe, concerning this letters commande. I thinke (answered the king) since you know the writers wisedome & zeale towardes you, you ought to execute the same. Let vs awaight the returne of our knights, replyed the Emperour, and then wee will departe, for I greatly desire to haue the Empresse knowe these newes: and looking out of a window of the Castle, they saw comming from the Cittie great multitudes of knights, seeming aboue 30000. What shall wee doe, said the Emperour, if wee should haue a greater conflict then that which is past? I thinke those bee your ensignes (replyed the knight) and looking more earnestly to thē, perceiued plainelye they were the same. For when it was bruted about the Cittie, (not knowing the number of the assaileants that had beset the Emperour) all the knights there, with Cittizens, Souldiours and their Leaders, armed themselues and came to rescue their Emperour. With them came the olde Prince of Macedon then arriued in the Cittie, and also the Empresse Clarinda, that would by no meanes staye, though by the way she vnderstood the whole successe of the fight, but would goe to visit the Emperour, who then descended to receiue them: to whom the Leaders, and the rest humbled themselues, with vnspeakeable ioy to see him safe. And when he knew the Empresse was there, without further stay went to her, where she was, to recounte their glad greetings. What hath become of you my most deare Lord (said the Empresse) for I perceiue you haue not beene at no great pastetime, so many sluggarde knights ly-

ing in

ing in field, for all I see your person woundlesse: and tel me where is the Prince Don Bryanell. Things haue befallen me (answered he) that requireth long time to dylate. Therefore alight and weele enter the Castle, where I will tell you all. So while they were at supper, the Knights Jousted and tilted about the field one with another, for ioy of the Emperours safetie: and the tables being taken vp, after some discourses, the Empresse vnderstanding their successe with the Damsels, and how they thought that those knights were Don Bellianis and Arsileo, she scarce could containe her selfe with ioy, though somewhat moderated it with feare of their great and daungerous wounds. May it not by some meanes be known (said she) if they were them? We know no more (replyed the king of Hūgary) then what is said. But the Emperor remembring the two olde knights, that with them came, and seeing at their departure they went not with them, said to the King: saw you not when you remained to see the wounded cured, amōg them two olde knights? They be in this other lodging, said the king, and because they were so greuously wounded, I durst not send them to Constantinople. Let vs go visit them (said the Empresse) and so went to their Chambers, whome they found in great paine by reason of their wounds: to whom the Empresse thus spake: how feele you your liues? good knights feare not, for you be in place, where you shall well be loked to, and shall want nothing needfull for your health. They in their paine, thinking her to be their Lady (answered) we are not so sorie for our wounds, as that we thinke Don Bellianis slaine, and you and we imprisoned, for of the battell with his father he had, he and his Cozin with the other knight rested wondrously woūded, and after so many assaulting them, wee cannot chuse but iudge them dead: yet since wee see you at liberlie, wee beseech you tell vs the successe of the same fight, and howe the Princesse remained, it being ended. The Empresse with great ioye perceiuing by these wordes, that the Knightes

which so valiantly behaued themselues in the battel, were the Princesse, her sonne and Cosin, and turning to the Emperour said. What say you now sir? is not the King of Hungaries suspicion well verified? The Emperour with wonderfull gladnesse straight went to the field, where his knights were with many Dukes, and great Lords, and meeting with the Duke of Trebento, deliuered vnto him those good newes: whereupon it was presently spread among all the people, how the knight that had performed such deeds of Chiualrie in the battel, was their Prince, and his companion was the Prince Arfileo his Cosin: whose vnspeakable ioye for these newes, cannot sufficiently be expressed, greatly praysing God that had so magnanimious a Prince to gouerne them after his Father. The Empresse that remained with the old knights, desirous to know more of them, discouered her selfe though against her will, and said. I am not the good knights, whom peradventure you take me for, and therefore I pray you tell me what fortune conducted you hither? The knights then recouering their sences, were very sorie she was not their Princesse, with whome they had spoken, and seeming not to mark her, made no answer but began to groane as through paine of their woundes. The Empresse leauing them, went out of the Chamber, and commaunded them to be againe dressed, continuing there with the Emperor sixe daies, in which time: the two knights were greatly amended of their woundes, of whome they knew the whole truth of the aduenture which Don Bellianis had vndertaken: of which the Emperor was exceeding glad, determining to aide them with men sufficient for such an enterprise. So he and all the rest departed to Constantinople, where many and diuers tryumphes, and games were ordained, in which the Emperor knighted two of the Duke of Trebento his sons, that in those games, won great honor, the one called don Castidel of the Roase, the other don Sabian of Trebento, whose notable deedes shalbe at large declared: and another, the sonne of the Duke of Ponto named don Persiano the courteous, and also

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the King of Argos sonne, by name don Bryamore, with many more, all which departed to seeke don Bellianis, thinking to finde him at Antioch, changing their vpper Garments, and Armor according to the Moriscoes: in which iourney we leaue them and the Emperour, that minded to send thither a great hoast of men, and goe himselfe in person. And now must wee turne our course to Don Bellianis, chiefe subiect of our labors, whome with his company we left in the Christalyne carres, drawne through the ayre by the inchaunted Griffons, as heretofore is mentioned.

CHAP. X.

What happened to the Prince drawne in the Griffons Charret. How they were cured of their wounds by the sage Bellona: and after, how they all departed towards Antioch.

DOn Bellianis and Arsileo, hauing mounted the Charret, guided by the Dwarffes, with the Princesse and her Damsels, as before is recyted, not knowing whether they might be conducted, were so swiftlye drawn by the Griffons that in very short time they were within the kingdome of Persia, not far from the great citie of Persepolis, and on the desolatest mountaines of all that land, the Griffons descended, hard by the mouth of a darke and obscure Caue, from whence came forth an old woman aboue two hundreth yeares of age, who comming before the wearie and faint Princes, kneeled to them, desiring that shee might kisse their hands. But when shee would rise, shee was straight knowne of the Princesse, who greatlye ioying with her sight,

hir sight, imbracing hir, accounting hir no lesse then if she were her own mother: and turning her self to Don Bellianis sayde. Now will our affaires (most excellent prince) happily proceede, for I tell you this is the sage Bellona, that hath brought vs hither by these meanes, so that nowe I haue vtterly exiled the feare I conceiued of your woundes. The Prince seeing her so nigh him, verie louingly imbraced her: the like did Don Arsileo, to whome the olde woman spake. Lette mee intreate you my good Lorde to alight, that with diligence your woundes may bee cured, together with the other knight your champion, whom I haue within this caue, that with no lesse necessitie then your selues I haue hither brought. The Prince recording the Dwarfes words when he mounted the Chariot, demaunded whether it were the Emperour his Father. No my good lord (said she) for there in no reason that in so perilous a time he should leaue his Empire, your selfe being thence absent: but it is the Prince Don Bryanell of Macedon. Then tell me, said Don Bellianis, howe remained the Emperour my Father. Well, lustie, and merie (replyed shee) for hee hath learned whom you were that in the battel aided him. But how came hee to know it, demaunded Arsileo: whereupon shee tolde them how. I am sorie for it (sayde don Bellianis) for they wil condemne vs of discourtesie. That is no matter (replyed shee) besides they will not take it in ill parte, knowing you did it to obserue your worde. I pray you (sayde hee) how was my Father so soone healed, for vnlesse I bee deceiued, hee was grieuously wounded. Straight shall you knowe it (sayde shee) and leading them through the Caue, she brought them to a Pallace, which they iudged to bee the stateliest that they euer sawe, where with helpe of many of the sages seruants, they dismounted, with whose diligent seruice they rested much contented, and beeing layde on rich beddes, the graue Patron sayd to them, hauing searched their wounds, I could at once cure your wounds, as I did the Emperours and don Bryanels, but doo it not because I will

keepe

kéepe you heere a few dayes: and aſſure your ſelues you ſhal be ſtraight out of all danger. And then ſhee applyed ſuch oyntments, wherewith they felt themſelues greatly comforted and eaſed, as if they had no paine at all. Don Bellianis intreated her that they might ſée the Prince Don Bryanell. You ſhall (ſayde ſhe) but firſt reſt a while, for you haue thereof great neede: and commaunding the windowes to be ſhut, toke the Princeſſe by the hande, and leauing the knights, led her through a long gallerie, not farre from thence, that reached to another lodging of the ſame making that don Bellianis was in, ſo curiouſly wrought, and of ſo rare workmanſhippe, that the Ladyes greatly admired it: and entering in another roome, they founde the Prince Don Bryanell walking alone, alreadie healed of his woundes, yet hauing loſt much bloud, hee looked verie pale and wanne: for the ſage Patron greatly commiſerating his daunger, prouided, as heretofore is ſpecified. For when ſhee went to cure the Emperour, ſhee made one of her Damſels to enter another way vnſeene, and fetching him thence, brought him thither in a traunce, and for all he was healed with the drinke that Bellona gaue him, yet knewe hee not in what place, nor in whoſe power hee was, neither knewe hee whether he was in priſon or at libertie, nor in what ſtate the battell remained, in which hee loſt the Emperour: and ſéeing his woundes whole, was in ſuch a wonder, that almoſt hee perſwaded himſelfe, waking out of a dreame, and ſéeing no body with whome hee might ſpeake, walked vp and downe the Chamber, ſéeking and deuiſing howe by ſome meanes he might reſolue his confuſed thoughts: and when he ſawe the Princeſſe Aurora and her Damſels, with the olde woman leading her by the hande, hee ſtraight knewe her garments, for as is ſayde, hee ſawe her before hee and Arſiles hadde begunne their Combatte: with whoſe ſight hee thought that hee and the Emperour were impriſoned by the knights with whom they had commenced their battell, and

yet

yet knew he not how that might be, hauing after ſéene them ayded by the Emperour againſt Don Gallaneos knights: but ſeeing them ſo nigh him, thought that though hee were in the priſon (as he imagined) yet ought he vſe that behauiour that his ſtate required, and ſéeing they were Ladyes, approached with that courteſie which might beſéeme one accompanied with ſuch knights. And ſhe hauing learned of the olde woman who he was, humbled hir ſelfe at his féete: which he vnable to diſturbe, did the like, deſiring her to graunt him her faire handes that he might kiſſe them: but they ſo long ſtriued to ſurpaſſe each other in courteſie, that Bellona commanded them to riſe, for their ſtate forbad ſuch ceremonies betwéene them: which they did, though not ſo free as at firſt, for they reſted greatly affectionate either of other, and don Bryanell at laſt thus brake ſilence. I do ſo wonder at the marueilous things ỳ ſince yeſterday haue happened me, that I know not if any ſuch haue bin or no, for being with the Emperour my ſoueraigne in battell, wherein I remained ſore wounded, and not knowing the ende thereof, I find my ſelfe at this preſent well and ſtrong, and in this rich and ſumptuous chamber, with whoſe like the whole world cannot cõpare, nor yet knew whether I be at libertie or captiue, though vnder ỳ power of ſuch kéepers I ſhuld imagine ſuch reſtreint a greater comfort to my greefe then any I can deſire. Wherefore excellent Ladie, I intreate you if you bee in the ſame caſe my ſelfe am in, as one that I ſuppoſe was preſent at all that befell you would declare it me, and that I may alſo with your fauour knowe the true ſucceſſe of the battell, and what is become of thoſe moſt haughtie knights that accompanied you, whoſe mighty ſtrength I am ſure the whole earth cannot equall, and for what cauſe am I here kept, whether with or without your will? Whilſt he vttered theſe words the Princeſſe earneſtly viewed him, and remained ſo greatly ſatiſfied with his good diſpoſition, (being a verie gallant knight) and ſeeing reaſon willed her to anſwere all his demaunds, thus replyed. Not without cauſe may you be confounded in your owne imaginations,

imaginations (excellent Prince) for I assure you, if now you enioy your life, it is by your being heere: and though the battell was fought nigh Constantinople, at this instant you are not so neare it, as to the Ryphean mountaines, ioyning vppon the great Cittie of Persepolis, for all which you may thanke this graue Matron that here is with me, seeing by her great knowledge you hither were conducted. The knights with whom you in the beginning combatted and came in my companie, are the Prince Arsileo, that with you fought, the other, whose battell was with the Emperour, is his sonne Don Bellianis. Is it possible: oh God, sayd Don Bryanell, that don Bellianis should with such glorie principate his haughtie deeds of Chiualrie. Account these the least (sayde Bellona) for I tell you neither the Emperour his father, nor any knight this day liuing, may with him compare. Certainely I thinke no lesse (replied don Bryanell) and more then you say dare I beleeue of that couragious Prince, hauing seene him performe such surpassing wonders in that one fight. But I beseech you let me know the ende thereof, and how the Emperour and hee do? The Emperour is well (sayd she) and the Princes both be in this house where you are, though sore wounded. Now I assure you, answered don Bryanell, I account my selfe most happie that after so many troubles I heare the most contentedst newes that my perplexed soule could wish, after the tempestous passage of a boysterous storme, with the calme approach of the al-comforting sunne. Wherfore lette vs without longer stay go visit them, and there may I knowe what else happened in this aduenture. Euen when you please (sayde Bellona) for I know they will no lesse ioy with your sight, then you with theirs. So taking him betweene them, they returned the way they came to the chamber, where they left the Princes, and entering it, they found them talking togither of their last aduenture. But when the Princes saw don Bryanell, they would rise to reuerence him, but hee running to don Bellianis beds side, bended his knee to the grounde, craning he might kisse his hands. The Prince tolde

him vp, and imbracing, so held him a while and said. I do greatly reioyce, renowmed Prince, to see you so well, though according to your great deedes, in the battell whereby you got many dangerous wounds, I thought we should not so soone see you: For which let vs thanke this Lady that with you comes, seeing she tooke such care of our safetie, which with all our states we cannot sufficiently recompence, hauing (next vnto God) by her meanes recouered our lost tiines. Therefore I thinke it reason (said Don Bryanell) seeing she is the instrumentall cause wee repossesse them, we in her seruice to the death vse them, that at least thereby we may seeme to satisfie some part of her many deserts, and so do intreat her to commaund them as her owne. Whereunto she thus answered. It sufficeth me great Lords, to haue done some seruice to such Princes, which doth surpasse all satisfaction whatsoeuer I may of you receiue: how much the more, that will not be so little which you must vndertake, in behalfe of this disinherited Princesse my Cosin, wherewith this resteth fully recompenced, which they againe replied with great courtesie: and then Don Bryanell went to Arsileo and imbracing him said.

We now haue time noble Prince to know the cause that moued you without my leaue to enter within this place. I am not so wearie of the last demaunde (replied hee) but that I may satisfie you now in this, though your selfe be well, and seeing that the last aduenture cost so deare, it were no reason to leaue you in this, vnsatisfied.

In these and such like speeches continued they till supper time: which come, they all did eate togither, because of the wounded Princes. Heere they stayed fiftene dayes, till the Princes were well able to trauaile: in which time and daye Bellona taking don Bellianis a part, she said vnto him walking through those roomes. I do well knowe most excellent Prince, and so iudge my selfe altogither vnwoorthy, and it not necessarye to giue you counsaile concerning your most great

actions.

actions: Yet because you are a stranger in an vnknowne countrey, and in a place where euerie one would wish your downfall with extreamest death, and so many needsome aduertisements I presume to tell you, that though faithfully in heart and with good reason you obserue, and vnfainedly keepe the lawe and religion of your profession, yet must you conceale it, and by no meanes manifest it, for if in the least respect you doo, it may cost you your dearest life. And moreouer, after that by the vertue of your inuincible arme you haue safely established the Princesse Aurora in her vsurped royaltyes, you must procure and endeuour to arriue at the Soldane of Babilons Court, where you must sustaine your neuer fainting heart, with your accustomed courage: for you shall there see your selfe in so many great perils, that you shall a thousand times wish for death, as a remedie for them. But heereof take no thought, for they are things ordained by the supremest powers, yet alwayes beare on your sheeld the same deuise that you nowe haue, though for her sake you shall be putte in great, and sutfer many and tedious passions, yet shall you bee thereby knowne, and your immortall fame blazed ouer the whole earths continent, which you shall still weare, till I aduertise you to the contrarie: Wherewith she ended, and the Prince thus replyed. I will not render to you such thanks as this care and great courtesies deserue, for euerie thing I possesse beeing at your commaund, it is reason you guard and protect them as your owne. Herewith they returned to theyr companie, and don Brianell hauing seene them both together, said. I would not haue you be so long together, neither that you should learn any thing whereby you might further excell vs in fight, which if it be so, it were no reason that I whose merites bee so inferiour to yours, should learne them. You may well doo it (replied don Bellianis) hauing in the last conflict reaped the profite, fearelesse of any thing that might haue happened vnto vs. In all things you will seeme to yeelde vnto mee the vantage,

answered Don Bryanell, though there be nothing in me that may any way please you or the Prince Arsileo, since as you shewe, you would haue me hadde that carefull feare of you, as well not knowing as knowing you, yet do not I knowe why I should feare you, beeing accompanied with the diuine beautie of this most fayre and excellent Princesse. You do well to iest with vs all (replyed shee) yet is it no matter, since your words expresse what small parte I haue thereof, hauing beene vnable to expell the doubt you had of the Princes being here.

Don Bryanell beeing of nature pleasant and courteous, kept them in pleasing chat the rest of the time of theyr beeing there, which was some eight dayes: which expired, they beeing desirous to depart thence, hadde an armour presented to each of them by Bellona, the richest and fayrest that euer was seene. That which Don Bellianis had, was of a tawny colour, with such naturall workes, imbossed with pearles so bright, that they yeelded as much light as tenne burning Torches in any darke place, but cheefely the shelde, hauing the verie selfe same image it hadde before, which was drawne with such perfection and curiositie of arte, that if they had euer seene the substance, they woulde haue iudged it the counterfeit or portrature of Florisbella, the Soldane of Babilons Daughter: which although the Princesse Aurora knewe, yet sayde nothing, imagining the wise woman had not without speciall cause set it there. About it was written the aforesaide Motto, so perfectly made with great Orient pearle, that it forced admiration in each beholder. Hee had also a scabbard giuen him for his sword, made of massie gold, with letters drawne thereon, declaring the manner of the winning thereof. Arsileos were like them hee hadde in the caue, and Don Brianels were of diuers colours, whose workmanship was worth a great treasurie. Did not I say I should in all things haue the aduantage, that for a white armor of no value, which I did weare in the battell, haue giuen mee

now

now so rich and faire? It is not giuen you as a gift for your olde saide Arfileo) but that you should pay for them. Vse not the office of a Marchant (replied Don Brianell) for who hath giuen me my armour, vseth not to sell any. If it be so sayd Arfileo) how payed you that which you weare. Striue not about so small matter (saide Don Bellianis) for I will pay for all, hauing greatest cause for it. Then straight were they with them armed: and taking leaue of the sage Matrone, she sayd. You will by the way need Pages to attend on you, therefore will I giue you three of mine, and so presented them three dwarffes, so little that they greatly delighted to see their smalnesse, specially that of Don Bellianis, whose shortnesse reached not to the others middle, though they were wonderfull lowe. Where inhabite, and are ingendred such gentle people as these? sayd Don Brianell, I should long remaine among them, if I should stay there, to be accounted nothing as euerie one of them is elsewhere. You shall not bee accounted nothing (saide Don Bellianis dwarffe called Ordino) for they would al so persecute you, that seeing your bignesse to theirs, they would (wanting ground) tread on you in steade of it. That were worse then the other (replied Don Brianell. But least we further procede in talke, it were good we set forwarde in our iourney. Wherewith, with most kinde courtesie taking their farewell of the Ladie of the Caue, set forth of the same. And being without, hee seeing the Princesse and Ladies all cloathed in most rich cloath of Golde, sayd with great laughter: Let vs (sirs) make more haste, for the destruction that these Damzels haue made, will cause some vnseene wanderer demaund it at our handes. But all that is left, is yours (said the Princesse) therefore feare not. If it bee so (replied he) I haue no lesse right to that which you carrie: therefore were it not amisse you giue it mee. The Prince Don Bellianis will not not suffer it (answered shee) hee being my guardian. For so much as concerneth me (sayd the Prince) I will defende you agaynst all the worlde. Thats not materiall (quoth Don Brianell) for on my side I haue the

Prince Arfileo, that will suffer none wronged in his presence. I cannot helpe you in this demaund (said hee) least I should incurre such punishment, as to my ill satisfaction, and lesse reason I should defend.

CHAP. XI.

What hapned Don Bellianis, and his companions with duke Alfyron the courteous, and how they proued the aduenture of the vnhappie bridge.

IN this order trauelled these Princes with as much pleasure as their young yeeres could require, fearing nothing that might anoy them, taking their straight way towards a Castell, some three miles distant from Antioch, for the Princesse told them it was a strong fortresse, and neuer yet won by any forraine foes: and that she and her Damzels would there remaine, where also they might determine of their affayres. For which cause they had a man to guide them thither, whom they receiued of Bellona. Which way they had not far gone, but by the same they saw towardes them come the number of twentie thousand knights, whereof the greatest part were verie sumptuously apparelled, and manie clad with rich and bright armor, insomuch that the Prince and his cõpanions toke great delight in seeing thẽ, & Don Bellianis stepping to one of the formost, that greatly admired him being so brauely armed, and on so mightie a courser mounted, and demanded thus. I pray you in courtesie tell me, sir knight, to whom belongeth this faire companie of Knights? he should be of no small account that such a traine maintaines. They belong (sir knight) answered he, vnto Duke Alfiron the Courteous, that now goeth to the Citie of Persepolis, because the great Sophy hath ordained great triumphes and iousts, wherevnto

vnto he hath inuited all the nobilitie of his Empire. Why prepares he so great feasts? demaunded the Prince. Marie sir (replied the other) not long since hee promised to giue one onelie daughter that he hath, to what Knight soeuer should slay the Emperour of Greece, or take him prisoner: which enterprise the Prince Don Gallaneo of Antioch vndertooke, accompanied with manie Knights: who is now returned with one cosen of his, by whom, and others that with them came, the Sophis is certified, how they left the Emperour so wounded, that he could by no meanes scape. For which cause he hath determined to giue him his daughter in marriage, and therefore in these triumphes doth he feast all his Nobles. But demaunded Don Bellianis) why doth the Sophy so, being vncertaine of the truth? He thinkes this sufficient (aunswered the Knight) that if it shoulde otherwise bee, it is thought vnpossible euer to effect it, for the Emperour being thereof forewarned, will with greater regarde looke to himselfe: and besides, his Daughter will not bee euill matched, hee being one of the best Knights in this lande. Though (to tell you trulie) wee bee not well contented with this marriage, for that the Duke our Maister was first greatly fauoured of the Princesse Persiana (for so is the Sophies Daughter called) and seeing nowe hee will marrie her to Don Gallaneo, he goeth verie passionate.

I commit you to God (said don Bellianis) for you haue much pleased me with your discourse newes: and turning to the Prince and his companions, tolde them all his talke with the knight, and demaunded of them, if they thought good to see those iousts at Persepolis, ere they passed forwarder. It wil be well done (said don Brianell) yet how shall we do, being vnprouided of a Tent? What need you care for that aunswered Arsileo) for it may be some will intertaine vs: if not, we must lie in the fields. And thus vnresolued, stoode still till that troupe past along. At which time some of them went to the Duke, (that at that time was verie pensiuely imagining on the Princesse

Persiana)

Perſiana) and ſaid to him. See you not (ſir) yonder three knights armed with the richeſt armour you haue this day ſeene, whoſe gallant diſpoſition cannot but content you, and ſtande in the middeſt of the way, ſeeming to demaunde the breaking of ſome Lances, and do alſo conduct with them about twelue Damzels, as it ſeemes no leſſe adorned with beautie, then they with valour. The Duke being deſirous to ſee them, ſtepped forth, being armed in a tawnie armour like Don Bellianis, and ouer the ſame he had a coate of cloath of golde, moſt richly embrodered with Pearles, whoſe brightneſſe being ouercaſt with beames of the ſhining Sunne, dazeled the beholders ſight. On his ſhield was pictured the God of Loue, of whom a Knight begged mercie, he rigorouſly denied it. And thus went he ſtraight to the Princes (while they gazed on him) going like a valorous and well diſpoſed Knight. The Duke no leſſe wondering to ſee their gallant demeanour, and riches of armour, ſpecially Don Bellianis, whoſe ſight ſurprized him with ſudden admiration: and being nigh them, he kindly ſaluted them (being of nature milde, gentle, and affable, for which he had obtained the name of courteous) and thus ſaid. I am ſo aſtoniſhed braue and valiant knights, in ſeeing the braue diſpoſition of your perſons, and ſtrange maner of trauelling, that I haue receiued ſuch content, as the like I ſhall neuer obtaine, chiefly at this time, being ſubiect to a grieuous melancholie greefe. And becauſe I ſuppoſe ye are going to the triumph at Perſepolis, I intreate you to employ me in this iourney, for that you ſeeme ſtraungers of ſome remote Countrey. And although the valour of our owne perſons may merite farre greater ſeruice, yet I pray you denie me not this requeſt: for I hope herein to diminiſh part of my boyſterous and troubleſome ſorrowe, with your gentle conuerſation. The Princes intreating one another to anſwer, Don Bellianis at laſt replied. The offers (moſt noble Duke) which by your liberall bountie we receiue, are ſo great, (as wee being no other then errant knights) can no way deſerue. And though wee had not

determined

determined to bee at those triumphes: yet to accomplish your request willingly doe condiscend thereto, yeelding the accompteleſſe thankes of duetifull seruitors at your commaund. For which the Duke very ioyfully intertained thē, with the Ladies in his owne company, and so made to Perſepolis, discoursing by the way of pleasant matters, till they came within a myle of the Cittie, harde by a great riuer, ouer which they muſt of neceſſitie paſſe by a bridge that there was. Which the Duke seeing, said: Confounded in our owne discourses (Sirs knights) wee haue lost our way. Don Bellianis seing the Cittie, and not knowing to what ende the Duke spake it, replyed. If that bee the cittie, I thinke this is the right way. Tis, answered the Duke. But we may not paſſe this bridge, for it will bee mightily defended. Whō bee they, (demanded hee) that will defend it againſt such knightes as bee with vs? They that doe it, will defend it againſt the whole worlde (answered the Duke) For in this kingdome are fower knightes, the valiantest that on the earth doe breath, all brothers. Which in one battell that the Souldan had againſt the Souldan of Babylon, performed in it such haughtie deedes, that by their proper valour, the victorie was obtained, which got them such honour, that till this day, they are reputed the ſtrōgeſt knights that may be found. Wheruppon the Sophy, to honour them, bad them demand what they would, and hee would graunt it. (They answered) they would haue nothing but this Caſtle & the Bridge, that no knights might go that way, vnleſſe hee ſhould leaue his armour and horſe, or ouercomming them all in fight, paſſe by. The Sophy granted it, with a great liuing beſides to maintaine their ſtates. So they being come to this bridge, haue brought with them two mightie and ſtrong Gyants, whoſe fiercenesſe no hundreth knights dare abide in combate together. And haue aboue three yeares defended this paſſage, and not any knight hitherto hath vanquiſhed them. For though they bee ſtrong and valiant, yet in their combate doe not proceede like good knights; For if it happeneth that a-

ny knight vnhorseth any of them, hee must Iouste with the others, till hee ouerthrowe them all: but if hee bee by any blowe himselfe ouerturned, he straight looseth his armes. Or if hee should vnhorse them all, hee must after combate with all six together, beeing the vnreasonablest thing that euer was heard of. And this is the cause why this bridge and way is no more vsed, by reason of the mishappes that there befalls to wandring knights: and therefore is called the Vnhappie bridge. The Princes greatly wondred at this aduenture, yet hauing greate desire to prooue it (don Bellianis thus said.) Truely, most honoured Lord, wee neuer heard of the like aduenture: but if so it please you, we will trye the fauours of blinde Fortune therin. So will it bee rather iudged madnesse, then valour (replyed the Duke.) For it lyeth not within the compasse of one mans strength, to vanquish them: For the least of them is able to withstand the famous Emperour of Constantinople, that is the knight most feared in these partes: whose sole name makes the Souldan himselfe tremble when hee heares it: and also dares oppose, and confronte the strength of our Prince, that is no lesse famoused then hee. Wherefore if you thinke good, let vs leaue this way: for I perceiue some of our company doe see it will bee a perpetuall blotte to our names (replyed Don Bellianis) if through feare wee should not aduenture our persons herein. Therefore commaunde them to stay: for I will not hence leauing this vnattempted. While they were thus talking, they saw on the other side of the bridge, a greate number of knights & Ladies, cloathed in triumphant robes, that were comming thither to sporte themselues. What faire assembly is yonder? (demaunded Don Bellianis.) It may bee (said the Duke) it is the Sophy, and his daughter the Princesse Persiana, that come to see if there arriue any aduenturer to the bridge. Although our falles were but to make them sporte (said Don Bellianis) wee will trye our fortunes. Doe as you will (said the Duke) though more willinglye I would take another way. Thereuppon they straight went towardes

the

the bridge: commandiog all their knights to doe the like, while they prooued the aduenture of the Castle: which they did, yet not with any good will. The Prince Arsileo intreated don Bellianis to graunt him the first battell. I will in no wise doe it (said hee:) but because Don Gallaneo is yonder, put on an vpper coate ouer your armour, lest you bee knowne. I will, (replyed hee:) but you must graunt mee this first combate. In reason it longes to mée (answered Don Bellianis) seeing in this iourney I am the Conducter of these Ladies. Wee haue (said Arsileo) as long accompanied them: therefore shall you not so excuse your selfe. Then, let the battell bee his (said don Brianell) whom the Princesse shall command. Striue not so about it (said the Duke) for you shall haue all ynough to doe. Now I iudge (saide the Princelle) seeing Don Brianell by my sentence demaundeth the iouste, that the first bee his, and next your: and the last bee his that would bee first, being reason that his strength bee best tryed when the others faile. Don Brianell greeued much because hee should be laste: but seeing it could no otherwise bee, dissembled it, and stepping to the Duke said. I beleeue we shall haue the bridge freer then I thought. The Duke smilde (as one that supposed their labour should be but in vaine.) And at length arriuing at the bridge, don Brianell began to be foremoste, seeing on the other side all the cõpanye come also thither. And stepping thereon, a Knight armed in an armour of diuers colours, mounted on a mightye horse, approaching nigh him, said.

What madnesse hath possesse this Knight, to seeke a passage ouer this bridge by me defended? With mightier force was Hell defended (answered hee) yet the vniuersall Sauiour of the world did ouercome it: In whose name I comming, it will bee no greate matter for mee to abate thy swelling pride.

By thy speech (replyed the Knight) thou seemest a Christian. What auayles not to our purpose (saide Don Brianell) therefore prepare thy selfe. The Knight with great angerd

thinking hee had him in little accompt, turned his horse, and tooke so much of the bridge as would suffice for his course, while Don Brianell did the like. All the men that came with the Duke, and the people come from the cittie, approached to see the battel, and many said, euery faire Horse and Armour shall the Knight giue vnto him of the bridge.

At which time the knights hauing turned their horses, ranne one against the other, and met so furiously, that the Launces flewe in peeces, & the knight of the bridge went to the ground, sorely bruzed, & Don Brianell so much bowed with his horse, that hee had almost done the like, but seeing what companye beheld him, raised himselfe with great courage, considering, it was the first thing that ỳ Princesse had commanded him. A great murmure arose among the beholders, for they neuer had seene any of the Brethren leaue the saddle before. Whereuppon the other three Knights & the two Gyants being armed, yssued all mounted on great and lustie horses: who when they sawe their brother on the ground, one of them made towardes Don Brianell, that alreadie had toke a Launce from his Dwarffe. The Princesse Persiana, that was she on the other side of the bridge, and Don Gallaneo, already called her Spouse, with ỳ Sophy his father in law, said to don Gallaneo. I haue not seene gallanter knights then those on the further side, especially yon foure (poynting to the two Princes, the Duke, and hee that Iousted on the bridge) and greatly doe desire to knowe who they bee. It is no other then the Duke Alfiron (replyed don Gallaneo) for I heard he slept not farre hence this last night. The Princesse Persiana hearing the Duke named, fetched a deepe sigh, as one that loued him with in the secrete of her heart, but for feare to displease her father, durst say nothing, yet thought she by the riches of his armour, it should bee hee, stood and viewed him very attentiuely, and seeing how the enraged knights with puisant force incountred each other, in such sort that their Launces brake in a thousand shiuers, and meeting with their horses, shieldes, and helmes,

both

both fell to the ground: but if Don Brianells horse had beene so good as his aduersaries, hee had passed without a fall, which hee had scant done whē the men of the Castle closed to vnarme him. But the Prince Arfileo desirous to auoyde it, with great choller entred the bridge: so did another of the aduerse parte, with such swiftnes as doth an arrow shotte from a bowe flye through the Ayre, or a thunderbolt breaking from seme swelling cloude: & with such mightynes incountred on the bridge, that the knight of the Castle was ouerthrowne, with a peece of ỹ launce sticking in his body. If it procedes as it begins said the Duke) wee shall freely passe. So shall it bee (answered don Bellianis) for with your auspicious fauour, they may bee brought to our wished ende. The Sophy was astonished to see the strong incounters of the knights, and speaking to Don Gallaneo, said. I neuer thought there could bee better knights then those of the bridge, but now I see what aduantage these haue ouer them. Wonder not thereat (said don Gallaneo) for in the battell wee had with the Emperour, there was in his ayde one nouell knight, whom hee there knighted, that performed such haughtie deedes in armes, that neither Hector, nor Achilles euer did the like. For beleeue me, hee no more seemed to bee assaulted by foure, or by two Gyants, then with one knight, and with his owne handes in the battell hee slewe aboue 12. Gyants, and 50, knights of mine. But as for the Emperour, I haue told you what happened mee with him in the Castle, he being vnarmed: so that you neede not wonder what these doe, though any of them doe end this aduenture, which I cannot beleeue: and if they doe, I will acknowledge it the greatest acte that euer I heard of, by reason their sword-fighting will bee so vnequall. Which hauing said, the eldest & the greatest of the brethren, came against Arfileo, intending to reuenge his Brothers death, whose incounters were so furious, that their launces were made in little peeces: and in such sorte met with their bodyes, that the knight of the Castle was ouerthrowne with a great wound on his side. And Arfil'eos

horſe with the ſtrong ſtroke recoyled backe three or four paces, that at laſte vnable to ſtay him, with admirable lightneſſe hee leapt from his backe, beeing a little wounded on the breaſt. The ſeruants of the caſtle went to him, to doe as they would haue don with don Bryanell: but the firſt that arryued, for his boldnes loſt his head: For Arſileo thinking hee ſhould not bee iudged ouerthrowne, layd hand on his ſword to defend himſelfe: wherewith hee would haue made them knowe his valour, ertended farther then thitherto hee had ſhewen. But the two brothers that Don Bryanell had vnhorſed, arryued with their drawne ſwords: the like did the Gyants. And on the otherſide Don Bellianis and the Duke did ſo, that in ſhort time among them all there began a terryble and fearefull battell: For all the Dukes knights would paſſe ouer the Bridge, But the Sophy, the Princeſſe Perſiana, and Don Gallaneo went and parted them, and demaunded the cauſe why they were ſo mingled togither, & did not proceede with their combate as they had begun: which eyther they ſhould doe, or let them paſſe? Wee are content to doe eyther (ſaid Don Bellianis:) but this knight fell not, ſeeing by anothers ſtrength hee left not the ſaddle, and therefore ought not to looſe his horſe vntill the iouſtes bee ended. He may no more mount (ſaid they.) Who ſhall iudge it (demaunded Don Bellianis.) Wee neede no iudge (ſaid they) for it is our cuſtome: but if any muſt be, let it bee the Souldan (our Lord) heere preſent. Be it ſo, (ſaid the Duke.) Then (ſaid the Sophy) I awarde, that ſince the knight was not by another vnhorſed, hee looſe not his horſe nor armour, but that hee bee vanquiſhed, ſeeing hee forſooke his horſe: ſo that hee may iouſt no more.

Great profite dos they get by this ſentence (ſayd a proude knight) that on the Souldan attended, and was a nere Alley to the Gyants that defended the Bridge. It is well iudged (ſaid Don Bellianis:) and beleeue me, had not the Souldan done it, no leſſe wrong receiued wee, then they.

But what art thou that ſhouldſt not a little count thy ſelfe, bee-

beeing more prouder then valyant, to speake against the Souldan thy Lords iudgement.

The knight inraged with desire to reuenge those words, answered. Let vs set aside the Souldans iudgement as a matter impertinent to vs: But if thou wilt, vppon whither of the knightes be ouercome accept this my gage, I giue it thee.

I accept it (aunswered don Bellianis) on condition wee may not passe the bridge, vnlesse by force wee doe it. You deferre it too long (said the knight) and our fight will be voide if you meane to winne the bridge by strength: for these knights earnestly desire your armour, beeing so rich. But I giue thee leaue to helpe them (aunswered don Bellianis) whereby thou shalt see howe little I account what thou so much esteemest.

All the beholders admired him, to see with what courage hee spake: but chiefly the Princesse Persiana, that going to the Duke Alfiron (whom shee did not know) beeing among the knights and not knowing what end that enterprize would haue, did not discouer himselfe, and said. I pray thee (good knight) tell mee who bee these knightes, for I greatly desire to knowe it. The Duke softly, that none might heare, answered.

No maruell (most beautious Princesse) and Lady of my heart, you at this time knowe me not, hauing imployed my seruice in your behalfe to so little regarde: But if (deare Lady) you had determined I should by your crueltie dye, why did you not commaund mee to bee my owne executioner, and not permit my eyes to see the sight of my liuing death. The Princesse by his speech straight knewe him, whereuppon for very greefe her eyes flowed with pearled teares: but dissembling least it should bee discerned, replyed.

The Gods knowe (great Duke) my greefe, for this marryage my Father intendes, is no lesse than yours, and therefore must wee perforce haue patience.

The

The Duke would haue answered her, but that he perceiued don Bellianis had ended the accepting of the battell against the proude knight. & that they of the bridge had graunted them the combate therin, condicionally, that if don Bellianis were ouercome, his horse and armour should be theirs: who greatly greeued for their brothers death: and more that they could not bee reuenged on him that had slaine him.

What happened Don Bellianis in the battell with the Knights of the Bridge.

CHAP. XII.

DON Bellianis inflamed with anger against the knight, withdrewe himselfe, to whom the Princesse Aurora thus saide. As much as other knights doe shunne the most dangerous fightes, euen so much, & more doe you seeke them. I can doe no lesse (replyed hee.) At this time arriued the Duke, hauing left the Princesse, and said to him. It were good you encorage your selfe sir knight, for you haue a very mighty aduersarie. All his strength will scant suffice him (said the Princesse Aurora) though hee be neuer so valiant. Which worde the Duke did so little set by as the first, seeing the Knights so well confirmed them by their haughty exployts

Don Bellianis with the enraged choller hee had conceiued, opposed himselfe against the knight, that also came towardes him: who very stronghye in the middle of his shield made his incounter, yet not hurting him at all, brake his launce, not mouing him in his saddle, for the inpenetrable vertue of the shield retorted backe the furious Pyon.

Don

Don Bellianis with the great desire he had to hit him, mist his encounter, so that their horses passed on their course with admirable furie. The great ire the Prince hereat conceiued by missing his incounter, is not described for want of skill, but verie furiously turned vpon the Knight, that did the like, and iudging it cowardize, hauing mist his encounter, and lost his launce, to draw his sworde against so vile and insolent a man, went towards him, receiuing a most heauie blowe vppon his helmet, and with incredible swiftnesse running at him, snatcht him twixt his strong armes, and as he were a litle child, pluckt him from his saddle, and impatiently gouerned by his present fury stept to the bridge side, and ouer it tumbled him downe into the riuer, where through the waight of his armour, he was straight ouerwhelmed, leauing the beholders so amazed at the deed, that the Soldan cried out. Oh immortall Gods, what mightie strength is this in one knight? It is wonderfull great, (said Don Gallaneo) that was something moued seeing him, and more circumspectly looking on him, thought that was the deuise of the nouell knight at Constantinople: yet he doubted it, being so farre distant thence, imagining he would come thither, by reason of the difference of religion. Yet seeing those Ladies there, did greatly suspect it. And againe turning his eyes towards him, he saw one of the knights of the Bridge pricked forwards against him. Don Bellianis that also went to meete him without launce, although the Duke called to him to take his, said. I haue no need thereof, hauing imployed mine owne so ill: but meeting the knight in the middle of the bridge, was forced to lose his stirrop by the incounter, and meeting with horses, shields, and bodies, the knight fell downe bruised, with his head all battered. Don Bellianis horse with the check reined immouable, till with his spurres he made him like a whirlewind flie, euen to the place where the Soldan and his companie were, that firmly had their gazing eies fixed on him. The Sophie seeing one of the Giants comming against him, sayd. Take a launce (sir knight) for you will greatly neede it in this

iouſt preparing for you. It is my Countries cuſtome (moſt excellent Lord) that the Knight which in iouſting before a King or Emperour, loſeth his incounter, through the little valour of his woorth may not vntill he haue ended the battel take another, which makes me now againſt my neceſſitie, ryde without it: and ſo prauncing, and with great courage managing his Horſe, he ſpurd againſt the Gyant, who not minding to leaue his Launce, though he ſawe the Prince without any, prickt againſt him: but he drawing his ſword before they met, cut it in two, and ſtepping aſide with his Horſe, let him paſſe in ſuch an amazement, that miſſing whereon to hitte and ſtaie himſelfe, ranne headlong forwards, and at laſt Horſe and all tumbled downe, the Gyant reſting ſore battered with the terrible fall: and the Prince ſeeing it, ſet himſelfe in his place, expecting the reſt of his aduerſaries: againſt whom came the knight that firſt iouſted with Don Brianel, and ſtaying for him, at the inſtant he would encounter him with his Launce, leapt aſide with his Horſe, making him loſe his ſtroake, and with great furie turning vpon him, ſnacht his launce out of his hands, and therewith with one blowe feld him to the earth, and returning to his place, brandiſhed it with great ioy. The lokers on, had almoſt perſwaded themſelues to dreame with the ſight of ſuch admirable exployts. The Duke was ſo raviſhed with gladneſſe, that he knew not what to ſay, to whom the Princeſſe Aurora ſpake. What thinke you (Sir) of the knight in the Tawnye armour? What may I thinke or ſay? (ſaid he) but ẏ in no time nor age of men, were neuer like herroike actions performed: & if he can ſo well vſe his ſword, as he can his launce mounted on his courſer, I doubt not but without impediment wee ſhal paſſe ẏ bridge. Straight ſhal you be aſſured thereof (ſaid ſhe.) And ſo brake of their talke: for don Bel. with the ſpeare he had take frō the knight, oppoſed himſelfe againſt ẏ mighty gyant, that blaſpheming old Mahomet, came againſt him with ſuch fierceneſſe, that ſoming like a Boare, and guided with a helliſh rage, moſt thicke ſmoke iſſued from the Vyſor of his helme, and in the middle of the ſpacious Bridge incountred that the

gyant brake his launce on don Bellianis shield: which slyding on it made him a great wound, whence issued much blood. The Prince strucke in such manner, that piercing his shielde and armour, mightily wounded him on the breast: and both meeting with their horses, the Gyant measured his length on the earth, and the Prince horse set both knees on the ground, wherewith hee rested so amazed, that hee had not ỹ remembrance to spurre him. Whereat the Prince Arsileo that saiwe him in such a traunce, & thinking him wounded to the death, would haue helped him, if the Duke had not bid him stand still, to see what the knights would doe: who greatly abasht at their vnhappie successe, did together go all against him: but before they arryued, the Prince had recouered himselfe, and very cholericke through that accident, straight dismounted, & imbracing his shield, drewe his sword with such furye, and little feare, as if hee had to doe but with one knight. The knight is not in his wites (said the Sophy) to leaue his horse in such a time, hauing to doe with so hardye knights, who in compassing him, did bestowe such mighty blowes, as might dissolue the limping Gods blacke steeled forge. The Gyants beeing somewhat slow in arryuing, by reason of their boysterousnesse, hoysted vp their slycing battell axes, thinking to end the battell with their first blowes: but the discrete Prince knowing how greeuous those strokes were to suffer, kept aside, that both alighted in vaine, and hee reached one of them such a blowe on the legge, that hee cut it quite a sunder: who not able to sustaine himselfe thereon, fell downe: yet was hee strucke in such manner, that hee was wounded in two places, while hee layd the other Gyant on the head, that the blood ran downe his eyes, and defending himselfe with his shield frõ ỹ knights blowes, struck him on the arme. hee held the axe that both fell togither for company, & the gyant going to take that with his other hand, could not through the excessiue paine of the fall by the incounter: & againe he was so mightily wounded on ỹ head, that he tũbled at his feete: & because he had put him in such trouble, sought al means to cut of his head, but ỹ knights

laid on him as did the Cyclops, when at Venus request by Vulcans cõmand, they forged Æneas armor in the euer burning Ætna mount, which forced him to sustain himselfe on the groũd with his hand: but he redubling his forces, with inraged valiancie, seeing the Giants troubled him no more, turned vpõ the three brethren, & wounded one of them (which most vexed him) on the head, that he cleaued it in two: the others imbraced him, thinking to ouerturne him, but they might as well tell the stars of heauen, or with casting water fill the wide vast Ocean sea. For the prince beeing the strongest knight of forces in the world, that few or no Giants could equall him therin, so brauely held one betweene his armes, that he thrust the peeces of his armor into his flesh, that the crimson blood gusht frõ his veines exceeding fast. And seeing that himselfe also lost no small quantitie, procured to shorten the fight, least he might therein faint. and so made them think (drawing them both to the bridge side) that he would throw them into the riuer: which they perceyuing, and the extreame state they were brought to, demaunded of him mercie for their lost liues. At which instant arriued the Sophy, and said: Seeing they can no longer defend themselues sir knight) be satisfied with that you haue done. For which our victorious name shall euer bee eternised throughout the spacious cõtinent of this earthly bal, hauing to end the greatest aduenture, y euer knight attempted. I am content to obey your command (most excellent Lord) answered the Prince, on this condition, that they no more maintaine this custome. That can not they do (replied the Sophy) for it was their owne agreement. Then the Prince leauing the knights, gaue God thanks, that so deliuered him from that great danger which they thought he did to their Gods. The Princes Arfileo and don Brianell, whose armes was taken away (with hope to do the like by them all) with the Duke Alfiron, and the princesse, went and imbraced him with such loue, as if he had reuiued from death to life. And the Duke was somewhat abashed of the little confidence he had shewen of them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

How the Knights were receiued of the Soldane of Persia: and their conference with the Princesse Persiana.

THe Princesse Persiana and Don Gallaneo, beeing desirous to speake with the duke Alfyron, hauing vnderstood by some of the knights, that he was there, were going to him: but he alighting from his horse, went to kisse the Sophies handes, and humbled himselfe before him, who the Sophie but then seeing, imbraced, and raising him from the ground, said. I am glad Duke, to see you come to honour our tryumphes, cheefely bringing to our Court such knights as these, specially bee in the tawny armour, whom I would haue you tell me what they be, assuring you the world cannot afford his like, and I rest so amazed, that I knowe not if any humane strength be able to accomplish what he hath. All the rest of his cõpany affirmed it, scarse beleeuing what their owne eyes had seene: and the Duke thus answered. It was you (my gracious lord) whom I would intreate to demand it of them, for though they came in my company, it is but verie little since I met them, and if they do not declare it to you, I doubt they will not doo it to any other. Speak to the Princesse, duke, sayde the Sophy, while I talke with the knights: and going a little further, sayd to Don Bellianis that was mounting on the giants horse, with whom he first iusted, whose like for bignesse, strength, & well made body the whole Persian Empire did not then containe: but perceiuing the Sophy came towardes him, would not mount, but as he was on foote, humbled himselfe to kisse his royal handes. The Sophie holding him with one hand because he should not kneele, with the other hand lifted, and imbracing him with great affection, sayde. There is no reason

Sir knight, why you should kneele to any, deseruing for your valour and incomparable bountie the same dutie of euery one. But for one onely thing must I nœds now intreate you, which I am sure you will not denie mee, iudging your courtesie no lesse then your haughtie courage, of which all such knights as you should as much prise themselues, as of their proper valor, which thing before I expresse it, I will thereto binde you by your promise. Tell me (most mightie Lord) answered Don Bellianis, what you will commaund me, for barbarous and vnciuill were he that should denie so great a Lord any thing, in the highest degrée appertaining to your royall seruice, although a knight of such small consequence as I, lesse then your behest should satisfie. Hereupon the Duke, Don Gallaneo, and Princesse Persiana, after their greetings, came thither to knowe the conference betweene him and the knight: so did the Princesse Aurora and the rest of her companie, who were entertained with such courtesie, as if they were knowne to be the greatest peeres of the world. At length the princesse Persiana thus said to the Princesse Aurora. I do intreate you (faire Ladie) least wee should derogate from the honour by your exteriour shew and the valour of your attendant knights you seeme to deserue, you would manifest the state and royaltie of your descent: for although you desire to conceale it, yet your worthinesse wil shine from the dignitie of your birth. She humbling her self, replied: I rather desire (most excellent Princesse) you should still conceiue that opinion of mee (though vndeserued) for after you should know me, my small deserts will then loose the fauours you nowe shewe me: for the meanesse of my state is such, that it doth not merite the fruition of these fauours. Seeing you will haue it so, I will no longer importune you (replyed the beautious Persiana) so euidently telling mee we merite not to know you, saue onely by your outward signes. But setting aside the worthines of your person, that well deserueth we shuld all obey you, let me then receiue the fauour, that you would vouchsafe to lodge within the Soldane my fathers Pallace.

We

We may say nor do any thing herein, (said Arsileo) more then the knight in the tawnie armour will commaund, to whom all obedience is due. Nay then (sayde the Soldane) if we list to know it, we shall easily knowe it by force of armes, but seeing he hath promised me a boon, this shall be it (sayde hee turning to don Bellianis) that you all take off your helmes, and that we may knowe your names. Don Bellianis stood somewhat pensiue, not knowing what to answere, yet thinking that the longer he kept silence, they wold the more suspect, he at last thus replyed. Truly excellent Lord, you haue demanded me a thing that by my wil I neuer would discouer, but seeing I can do no lesse, there is no reason I shuld deny it, & therfore wil declare it with license of this my cõpanie. We wil allow whatsoeuer you shal do, sayd they. The princesse Aurora was at this time in great feare least they shuld be knowne, thinking ỹ don Gallaneo had seen them in the castle when don Brianell was caried thither, but they deceiued themselues, for he had not seen thẽ but armed, when he was there taken. Don Bellianis replying, the Soldane said. You shall know (my good Lorde) I am called the knight of the golden Image, because I beare it on my sheeld, and I assure you at this present I haue no other name, neither may I haue it, till I be commanded the contrarie. This my companion, poynting to don Brianell, is nominated the venturous knight, and this other is the Prince Arsileo, if euer you heard him named before, Prince and sole heire of the kingdom of Rasia. This Ladie whome wee accompanie, is the King of Carcasias Daughter, with whome through a certaine aduenture, we were al going to the king her fathers Court. This is al most noble Lord, what in this case I can declare, protesting by the fayth of a knight, I may not more discouer, for I my selfe doo not knowe it. You haue doone with me (replyed the Soldane) although I desired larger information: and seeing there remaines no more to doo, I pray you vnlace your helmes, that my desire may further bee satisfied. Arsileo and Don Bryanell straight way obeyed, being verie glad to heare

how

how well don Bellianis had answered: which done, they all highly commended thē for their braue disposition. The Princesse Aurora till that time being sorrowfull, not knowing what replie don Bellianis would make, with great ioy stepped vnto him, vnlaced his helme: whose fayre complection, with the gallant constitution of his well knit members, and strength of body, was highly admired, hauing his haire like threed of massie gold, disheueled hanging on his shoulders. The sight of this his rare fauor, with his haughtie exployts in armes, made them amazedly think him the offspring of the mighty god of war, iudging it impossible that any mortall creature should possesse two such extreams, wherin he surpassed al within ỹ compasse of the earth. He was of stature higher thē any knight in that time, his hands long and sinowy, betokening his excellue strength, his shoulders big and large, whose breadth might mainely beare the puissant burthen of olde Atlas forces. His face whiter then the purest Alabaster, commixt with the Roseate colour of a naturall red. Therein was placed his eagle-penetrating instruments of sight, as bright as the resplendant rayes of the meridiall sunne: and to conclude, there was none afflicted with blacke heart oppressing melancholie, but in examining his perfections, would on a sodaine banish that enemie to quiet pleasure. He had moreouer a certaine maner of milde grauitie, that with it he drew vnto him the loue of the admirers: for it being with anger moued, there could be no countenance more sterne then his, yet he so restrained himself by forcing it from him, that straight he would expell it. He was a great maintainer and louer of iustice, that if any did committe a fault or erred, he himselfe would see him punished. None in his time could equall him in forces. His speech was rare but wise, and neuer spake but premeditated vpon occasion. When ỹ Soldane sawe such accomplished perfections & compleate vallor in one knight, hee again imbraced him, conceiuing so great pleasure, ỹ had not the marriage of his daughter bin so forward, he would willingly without further knowledge what he was, giuen hir him for his

wife

wife, & at last he brake their silēce with these words: Most glorious knight, I impute it no fault in you in being so vnwilling to discouer vnto vs your rare parts, which only to ẏ high immortall gods, as things altogither proper and appertaining to thēselues, doo belong: to whom I render recountlesse thanks, that in my time they haue vouchsafed to send so great a woonder among vs, in this our age. At the time that Don Bellianis wold haue kissed his hands, which he not consented, arriued the Princesse Persiana with Don Gallaneo, leading with them the Princesse Aurora. Whereupon the Souldane and the Knight mounted on theyr horses, and the Ladies on theyr Palfrayes, and don Bellianis hauing his woundes first dressed by the Damsels, who also did the like to the knights of the bridge, they tooke their way towards Persepolis. The Dukes traine was exceeding merrie, to haue in their company so famous knights, for those tryumphes: don Bryanell, that was called the aduenturous Knight, stepped to the beautious Persiana, and as one that in courtly courtesie, and pleasant discourses was inferiour to none, said vnto her. Seeing faire Princesse, my name is not opposite against any fauour I may receiue, I beseech you make me thereby assured firme against all changes of al reuoluing chance: in signe whereof, grace me by your graunt, with the leading of your palfray by the raynes, whereby I may with the fruition of your diuine companie, inioy all that I may desire, which is to rest sole yours for euer, since yonder knight (meaning don Gallaneo) hath taken on him my office with the Princesse my Lady. This he said because don Gallaneo did lead the Princesse Auroraes palfraye, which though she suffered, was to dissemble that she knew him not, rather desiring his death, then at his hands any such fauour. The like wish wished the Duke Alfyron. The Princesse Persiana, no lesse gallant in talke, then rarenesse of beautie, replyed.

I would not sir Knight, that about your seruice, the Princesse your Lady and I should iarre: but seeing she doth accept a

ſtranger for her ſeruitor, ſhe ſhall receiue the guerdon of her change: and therewith ſhe gaue him the raines, which he gladly toke: to whome the Princeſſe Aurora ſaide. I know not ſir aduenturous knight, wherein I haue ſo much diſcontented you, that you ſhould ſo ſone drowne mee in obliuion: but if it were in commaunding you to proone the aduenture of the bridge: hencefoorth will I be more conſiderate, and ſo you ſhall be leſſe greeued, yet notwithſtanding all thinges haue ſo well befallen you, that you haue no cauſe of greeuance. True, ſaid he, if the Prince Arſileo had not got more by that proſe then I. What haue I obtained more? demanded Arſileo. The commaundement of my Lady the Princeſſe (ſaide he) beſides the horſe you haue vnder you. So haue you got your armor which you had loſt (anſwered Arſileo) for which you are beholding to the knight of the golden Image. I haue no reaſon to thank him for it, replyed hee) for he did it more to keepe his owne that are ſo excellent, then becauſe I ſhould not loſe mine. Then were it good (ſaid don Bellianis) ſince you wil not thanke me for them, that you reſtore them backe to me. We ſhall not ſo ſone ende this quarrell as you did the other (replied Don Bryanell) for the knights loking for yours, would to haue them willingly let me haue mine. Let this paſſe (ſaide Don Gallaneo) for had you loſt theſe your gallant diſpoſitions, yon would haue gotten others. In this manner at length they arriued at the Cittie, euen at the dayes departing, giuing place vnto the mighty gliſtering ſtars, twinckling in the firmament, where they founde the people attending for their comming with lights and torches, who in troupes filled vp the ſtreetes, that they had no way to paſſe: for the newes being ſpread, that one knight had vanquiſhed the keepers of the vnhappie Bridge, they all flocked to ſee him, as a wonder, demaunding one of another which was hee, neuer inough ſatiſfied with his ſight, that all this while talked with Don Gallaneo, till they all came to the pallace gate, where they alighted. The beatious Perſiana was diſmounted by don Bellianis, that ſaid to don Brianell: I haue at

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this time (Sir aduenturous knight) deceiued you of the reward of your labour, hauing on foote obtayned more, thē you in all this iourney. You are all against me (replyed hee) but I may haue a time to crye quittance with you for it. Don Gallaneo taking the Princesse Aurora in his armes, they all entred the royall Hall: whence all their companye departed, The Souldan importuned the three knights to stay within the pallace, which hee could not obtaine. For they answered they would in no wise leaue the Duke, till the triumphes were ended: so said the Princesse Aurora that neuer woulde disassociate her knights: & so with leaue of the Souldan and his daughter, they also departed.

Well did don Bellianis note when they were taking their leaue, how the Duke Alfiron shewed no good will towardes Gallaneo, wherefore hee was desirous to bee certified therof: and beeing come to the Dukes Pallace, that was one of the best and greatest in the citie, Don Bellianis would not stay for supper: but finding himselfe weake through the much bloode hee had lost, cast himselfe on a bed that was made for him, where his damzels did againe dresse his woundes, whyle the Duke and the rest satte to supper: where they were so well serued as they had beene in Constantinople, and after went to visit Don Bellianis: whence departing, they went to repose their wearied bodies.

CHAP. XIIII.

The conference betweene the Princesse Persiana, and the Duke Alfyron, with the knight of the golden image.

THe nert morning, scarce had the sonne mounted on his fierie wayne, to make his ordered course about the world, but the Duke Alfyron went to visit the knight of the Golden image, for by no other name would hee bee knowne to them, vnlesse it were to the Princesse and ladies, and entring his chamber, he found him rising, though his wounds were great. The Duke with a kinde congye gaue him the goodmorrow, and said. Trouble not your self to ryse sir knight, for your wounds may put you in great pain. Thinking you went to the tourney (aunswered the Prince) I would make me readie. What shall wee do there to daye? (replyed the Duke) but I beleeue if the Souldane knewe you were so weake, he would come to visit you. Then were it not amisse (sayde the Prince) that I did rise to saue him that labour.

With this entred the Ladies also to visit him, bidding him in no case rise, till they further aduised him: wherewith hee lay still, and so the Ladies left him with the Duke. But he hauing great desire to be auenged on don Gallaneo, by reason of the promise he had made his father, and perceiuing the Duke had like intent, and desiring to knowe it, said to him. Tell me sir which of all those knightes was the Prince don Gallaneo of Antioch? That was he (replyed the Duke) that led the Princesse Aurora by the raynes of her palfray, borne to rob mee of my earthly ioyes. What is the cause thereof, demaunded he, for so great a Lorde as you should easily bee reuenged on any person

person whatsoeuer, being mooued thereto. That is not the thing that may remedie my greefe (said the Duke) yet I pray you let me know it (sayde Don Bellianis.) Then thus beganne the duke. I was a long time captiuated in the loue of the beatious Princesse Persiana, and of her so highly fauoured, that with little labour I might haue obtained her for my wife, if my reuolning fates had not opposed themselues against my happinesse: and so declared to him the whole processe of his loue, with such sorrow, that Don Bellianis could not restraine his teares, taking great compassion of him, though glad in that this might be a meanes to effect his owne intent, and thus answered. Do not thinke your matter so happelesse, but imagine you may by some meanes attaine the Princesse Persiana to your wife. I cannot perswade my selfe (replied the Duke) there may bee any remedie for my greefe. For to morrow after dinner the iousts beginnes, and the same morning the Princesse is married to Don Gallaneo, wherby I see no hope but death, for anchorage and end of all my paines, or to depriue my life of my vitall senses, before my eies do view it. Do not so afflict your soule (sayd Don Bellianis) for I haue thought vpon a meane, which if you agree thereto, is, that to morrow we all meet at the Tourney, where, if Don Gallaneo, (thinking himselfe the best Knight within this Court) doth enter, there also I meane to bee in an vnknowne armour, and meeting with him will disappoint him of his new betrothed loue. For I haue no lesse desire then you, to sende him out of the world. And to the end with more secrecie wee may do it, you shall giue out, I am so sore wounded, that I rest vnable to rise, and so Don Gallaneo shall not scape my handes, and your intent shalbe at full accomplished. If this faile, you haue such knights, that with the maugre all the court, I will conduct her where you will. The duke hearing this, knew not where he was, with ioy, & imbracing him said. Not without great cause (renowmed knight of the golden image) did I from the first houre I saw you, comprize such loue of you, & was so suddenly affected, as the man in whom might

conſiſted the remedie of my torments, although we know not fully howe wee ſhall accompliſh it, by reaſon at this preſent there is aboue fiftie thouſand knights in the court, that I doubt we ſhall not ſo eaſily ſcape with our liues, for all I little regard my owne. Thinke not ſo much on the end (replied Don Bellianis) if you ſee the matter happily begunne: for there is nothing ſo ſurely grounded, but the beginning will require great labour, eſpecially ſuch enterpriſes as theſe. Wherefore my opinion is, ſeeing our time is ſo ſhort, that you ſend halfe of your men to attend our comming in the way we muſt take, ſome ten miles hence, taking with them double horſing, that when we arriue with ours tired, & being ther forced to fight, we may find freſh horſes. And this done, 1000. choſen men wil ſerue to fetch her hence, ſo that they perfectly kaow the way. The duke liked well of this counſel: where they broke of, being aduertiſed how the Soldan, & the princeſſe Perſiana, with all the chief nobilitie (except don Gallaneo, that remained about another matter, which ſtraight ſhalbe declared) came to viſit him: wherfore the duke hearing it, wēt to meet him, yet for al his haſt he found him comming vp the ſtaires talking with the princes Arſileo, don Brianell, & Aurora, that went forth to receiue them: who when they ſaw the duke go towards thē) the princeſſe Perſiana ſaid. I feare (great duke) you are alreadie aſſured of the victorie of the iouſts, being in companie of ſuch valiant knights, which makes you thus keepe your Chamber at this time a day, notwithſtanding I can tell you, you haue many aduerſaries: therefore aduiſe your ſelfe, and loke well what you haue to do, and muſt in your own defence performe. The duke kneeling before her, demanded her beautious hands to kiſſe them, for that fauor ſhe did him by her good counſel, & that none might heare replied if your diuine fauor, moſt excellent Lady, doth not forſake me, I may ſecurely reſt fearleſſe of all dangers: but I doubt I ſhall with your abſence remaine altogither vnable thereto, hauing loſt the fruition of your diuine fauor, poſſeſſed by a ſtranger in my ſight. The princeſſe made him riſe, and that ſhe might more

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at her pleasure talke with him, take him by the hand, and that euery one might heare, said. Seeing you haue thus long bin idle I meane now to task you for your labor: for you shalbe this day my gardian, for that the aduenturous knight may not be both the princesses and mine, & therfore wil I renounce him, hauing so sone forgotten me. Then belike my selfe being desirous (said don Brianell) to obtaine both your fauors, must now feare to lose all: yet am I content, that my Lord the duke may haue the inheritãce of my place. Thus chatting they arriued at don Bellianis lodging, who wold haue risen to receiue thẽ, but the Soldan wold not suffer it. And going to his beds side, demaunded how he felt himselfe: whereunto he replied. I cannot but be well (most dread Lord) resting so bound to your imperiall maiestie, that I know not how I may acknowledge satisfaction for ỹ left of these your royall fauors, which forceth in me no lesse paine, then the grief of my late receiued wounds. While they were all earnestly talking, the Princesse Persiana saide to the Duke. What pretend you to do against to morrows turnamẽt, or will you not be there? I will do no more (answered he) then you will cõmand me: for I came with no other intent. Then she said: seeing you leaue it to my dispose, I think, because the knight of the golden image, by reason of his woũds cannot be there, that you faile not, for you shall reap greater fauor at my hands then don Galleano: in tokẽ wherof I present you this flag, & set it on the top of your creast, which with my hands I wrought, vnknowẽ to any: which that none did see, she take it out of her pocket, and gaue it him. The duke receiued it with wonderful content, and kist her hand, resting the ioyfullest man aliue. Think not much of that I do, for my father doth force it, & I would put my self in danger to auoid it: and I haue greatly reioiced that you haue brought with you such valiant warriers, as at the vnhappie bridge I saw. For if the knight of the golden image were not as he is, I would haue intreated him to procure to dissolue this match, done contrarie to my hearts intent. He and I haue cõferred about this matter (saide the Duke) yet speake you with him about it, that he may knowe this to be with your consent.

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whereupon she then went to his beds side, while the Soudane talked apart with Arfileo, whom he highly esteemed, knowing him to be so great a Prince as Don Bellianis had sayde. The princesse Persiana seeing so good occasion, demaunding how he felt himself with his great wounds, as much greeuing for them, as though he were the Prince her brother, and the more, being in time wherein she so much needed the helpe of his vnconquered strength, to the subuerting of her enemies: whereto he answered: I do feele my selfe (most excellent Princesse) verie wel, especially to accomplish any thing appertaining to your high seruice, wherefore assuredly commaund and imploy mee anie way wherein my worthinesse may preuaile for your behoofe. It is no small promise (replied she) you offer me, for as I do greatly neede it, so shall I haue cause to employ the greatest part of your valour. And therfore (most glorious knight) know, as you alreadie haue vnderstood of the Duke, that the Soldane my father hath determined to marrie me to the Prince Don Gallaneo: which doth so torment my passion-broken heart, that I here vow, if al other meanes of my desired remedie do faile me, my proper hand shall finish the tragicke scene of my afflicted life, ere I will consent to this vnfortunate wedding: & though many nobles haue solicited my father to the contrarie, yet will he not be satisfied, answering them woordes vnbeseeming both his maiestie and their estates. Wherefore if I haue cause so to complaine of my soule-consuming greefes (if euer you felt the like) you may easily iudge. And to conclude, I haue determined to marrie none but the Duke Alfyron the Courteous. For when I sawe your high admired deedes in the battell, I then assured my self of help. But now through your greeuous wounds it hath since so increased, that had I not discouered my discontent vnto you, I had to morrow wedded me to death, rather then to him I so abhorre. Therefore this onely I intreate you, that commiserating the state of me the most vnhappiest Princesse liuing, you would procure some redresse to terminate my woes, that I may not fall in his hands whom mortally I hate:

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I meane Don Gallaneo, wherein you shall commit no error against my father, whose decaying honour with his life, will be augmented by his death. For Don Gallaneo is not the man that merits his Daughter, being a knight of the least faith at this time liuing. And I cannot be perswaded, that so famous and glorious a Prince as the Emperour of Greece, could by him be assaulted, vnlesse it were with treason and such like. And the greatest corasiue to my hart is, I cannot in some night steal out of the Pallace, and so depart with the Duke, whersoeuer he would conuey me: which my father suspecting, kæpeth mee with a great gard. Thus haue I (sir knight) disclosed the tenor of my græfes, beseæching you that if any hope of remedie hang in the angry skies for my release, you would let me know it, assuring your selfe, I will refuse no daunger, and will vndergo al perils, accounting them as greatest pleasures, so therby I may frustrate this detested match. Don Bellianis all this while rested much amazed, to see how passionately the Princesse græued, and with what confidence she had manifested vnto him her minde: and without longer deliberating on the matter, as if he had resolued thereon with consent of his Companion, replied. Great is the pleasure I haue receyued (most excellent Princesse) with the knowledge of this your resolue, hauing thereon ere this conferred with the Duke, and so I only expected this your high commaund, and also hoping you would bind me to your perpetuall obseruation, by your visitation I remained thus in bed, by which occasion I more conueniently might know the resolution of your minde, which now being assured of you, shall næd no more, then commit the execution of all vnto my charge, your selfe seeming to know nothing: for I protest and promise you neuer more after to put on armour, if this marriage be effected with Don Gallaneo, And doubt not but with the helpe of the immortall Gods, it shall be as I say: But least we should force suspition by our long discourse, I will not any longer stay you. With which conclusion she rested the contentedst Ladie in the worlde, seeing howe well those affaires

would proceed according to her desire, onely for that the knight of the golden Image had so cõfidently vndertaken so waighty a charge. And so after some ceremonies betweene them, shee fell in discourse with the other Knights and Ladies, while the Soldan was taking his leaue of don Bellianis, and the Princesse Aurora; and the like did his Daughter. Which done, and both parties resting content, they departed towards the Pallace, and with them the Princesse Arsileo, and Don Brianell with the Duke, who leauing them there, returned to their lodgings to order the determined purposes: whereupon they straight commaunded that two thousand Knights should that night depart, and attend their comming at Dianas groue. And themselues prepared howe and in what manner they would meete in the tourney the insuing day, and so expecting the next morrow with hope to execute their determination.

CHAP. XV.

What conference passed betweene the Prince Don Gallaneo, and his cosen Don Galfeo the vnknown: and how they resolued to kill the knight of the golden Image, and his Companions.

MAny and great were the thoughts that troubled Don Gallaneo, seeing that the Knight of the Golden Image had ended the aduenture of the Bridge, which made him imagin he should know him by comparing the haughtie deedes hee then had done in that battell, to equall those he saw him do in the conflict of Constantinople where he ayded the Emperour Don Bellaneo: wherefore taking a part his Cosen don Galfeo the vnknowen, brake into these speeches. I cannot tell (good Cosen) whether you haue marked what I haue, and knowne that which greeues

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me to the heart: yet notwithstanding, know for certaintie, and I am so perswaded that the Knight of the golden Image is he that fought against vs at Constantinople, in the battle of the Emperour don Bellaneo: whom if he be, then commes he only to procure our vtter ouerthrow, with vntimely death. For though the Emperour should be liuing, yet I so feare them, that vntill I haue the Princesse in my power, I shall not rest, through extremitie of passions, of those disturbing thoughts which haue so bereft me of my senses, that I know not what course to take. Don Galfeo hereat amazed, did replie. Either I haue beene blinde, or not in my selfe, in not noting those Knights, as you haue: yet assure your selfe (for so do I) that the Emperour is himselfe come disguised with them. For in the conflict with him, there was but two, and now there are three which doth confirme it, else could no knight in the worlde performe such admirable deedes against the Knights of the bridge, but the Emperour. Therefore determine what you will haue done with them, since wee haue them at our pleasure in the Dukes Pallace. None of them is the Emperour, for I knowe him verie well (said don Gallaneo.) But know (I thinke it best) that to morrowe when the iousts begins, the Duke being Generall of all the aduenturers, and I of the Courtiers, you shall take fiue hundred chosen Knights, and with them march to the Dukes lodging, which you shall finde without my gard. There go vp to the Chamber the Knight lieth in sore wounded, where you may easily depriue him of his life, and the like will I do by his companions in the field. All this approued don Galfeo, being as false a traitour as his cosen, and that night they prepared those men they thought meete for that enterprise, determining to put the princes to death before their malice were knowne.

CHAP. XVI.

Howe the iourney began: and in what anger the aduenturous knight, and Arfileo were put by Don Gallaneos Knights.

NO sooner had the resplendent Sunne, expelling the obscure darkenesse from the glomie skies, clearing the morne with his bright light, on that in euerie place so celebrated day of S. Iohn, but with vnspeakable, and long hoped ioyes there began in the Citie of Persepolis, such ecchoing noise of military instruments, as if it had beene like to be subuerted by furie of some terrible assault, of forraine foes. Through the streetes were nothing seene but most sumptuous and rich furnitures, and manie and diuerse rare inuentions, for all maner of new deuised pastimes. All the people prepared themselues as appertained to the celebration of so mightie a Princesse nuptials. The knights on the other side, though they apparelled themselues with rich triumphant roabs, yet had they speciall care of their armor and horse, which in the afternoone they should vse. The Prince Don Gallaneo (after he had agreed with his cosen that towards the euening he should be in readinesse to execute their appointment) did superbiously adorne himselfe, and accompanied with manie knights & Lords in nüber 2000. he went to the pallace, where by the way he met the kings of Arminea, and Tessifanty, with many other strangers, amongst whom were aboue 30. dukes and Earles, and with the sound of innumerable trumpets, and al other sort of harmonious instruments, whose far resounding noise made all the vallies there adioining ecchо with the sound till they arriued at the pallace, where they attended their returne, while the excellent and fayre Princesse Persiana issued forth

forth with such admiring beautie, that it more increased the Duke Alfirons greefe. Her gowne was of white Saten, cut vpon cloath of golde, tackt with silke, and golden twist, and drawne forth in Roses. In the middle of euerie one was set an orient Pearle of great bignesse, that it made the gowne of such excellent valour, that euery one esteemed it worth no lesse then the whole Citie of Persepolis: her Amber haire like the threeds of finest golde, was in tresses in a net of the same stuffe knit together, whereon was placed a Coronet, set with great and faire Saphires, in the middest whereof stoode a stone grauen with the Image of the God of Lone, with his bowe and arrowes, whose sparkling brightnesse would haue darkened the light of a great Torch. The Duke Alfiron when he saw her in this maner, remained altogither without feeling: which Arfileo (that was nigh him) seeing, sayd vnto him verie softlie. Looke to your selfe (most noble Duke) least you discouer what hitherto hath beene vnknowne. Whereat the Duke recouered himselfe, greatly abashed at the accident: but euery one was so occupied in eying the Princesse, that they little regarded anie other. Whereupon the Prince Arfileo, and Don Brianell, tooke her by the handes, and ledde her to the Pallace stayres, where they all mounted on such horses and palfrayes as appertained to their high state: in which equipage they went to their chiefe Temple, where by the high Priest they were marryed, according to the Pagan rytes: which done they returned to dinner, dyning togither drowned in all earthly ioyes, wanting nothing that anie mortall heart could by wishing comprehend, though at the banquet the thoughts of manie were diuerse: For the Duke Alfiron thought howe hee might take the Princesse from Don Gallaneo, and inioy her after the taking. Don Brianell, and Arfileo, how they might spoile him of his life: and he of theirs, with the Knights of the golden Image: but the Princesse Persiana had all her imagination busied more on the promise of the Knight of the golden Image, then on the diuersitie of dishes before her.

And dinner being ended, al the knights went to arme them, to be ready at the appointed houre, with their captaine in fielde. The Iouſts were ordained to be made without the Cittie, in a ſpacious & large field, for that purpoſe appointed. Don Bellianis, though ſore wounded, roſe and armed him in greene armor, interlaced with manie ſtrokes of gold, which the Duke had giuen him, who commanded all the knights to march away, leauing him alone, that he might more ſecretly go himſelfe. The Duke went accõpanied with Arſileo & don Brianell, ordering his men as one little eſteeming his enemies, hauing ſo great defence in thoſe two valiant warriours, & his hope in the knight of the goldẽ Image. With him ioyned the kings of Armenia and Theſſifanty, hauing on their ſide aboue 25. thouſand choſen knights, which in compariſon of the courtiers were but a hãdful, for Don Gallaneo trebled that number: who by this appeared on the other ſide with al his troups, wel ordered, & with gallant demonſtration. Then on an imperiall theater mounted the Soldane, the two princeſſes Perſiana and Aurora, that till that time had not gone abroad: who ſo ſone as they were all ſetled, the Soldane cõmanded the ſignal to be giuen by the trumpets, wherat Don Brianell that had the leading of the firſt ſquadron, ſet forwards with it againſt a valiant knight, a kinſman of don Gallaneos, whom he vnhorſt with foure more before hee brake his launce. The ſquadrons breaking through each other, made ſuch tumult with incounter of ſpeares, ſwords, & diuers other weapons, that the beholders thought al the ſtrength of ỹ world had bin there met: who ſo cloſed togither, that hauing no rome to handy blowes, weld by wraſtling ouerthrow each other, that horſmen tumbled to the ground; and he that once fell, did more ſtriue to get out of the preaſe, then to returne to the fight. But Don Bryanell ſeeing his enemies to deuble his men in number, thruſt himſelfe within the moſt furie of the battell, where hard by the Soldanes theater, meeting with a knight of ſtature like a giant called Fydaſto the cruell, raiſed both their ſwords, and together at one time diſcharged on each other ſuch blowes,

that

that Fydasto was ouerthrowne and wounded on the head, and don Bryanell bowed to the pummel of his saddle, with greate courage staying himself. This was one of the knights that don Gallaneo had charged to kill don Bryanell and Arfileo: who seeing himself downe, with a diuelish rage rose, & with a hoarse voyce cried, Downe with the knight, that against the order and law of tourney, beareth an edged sword: whereof he had no cause to complaine, for hee and the other two knights that had the like charge, did weare the like. Straight was the venturous knight incompassed with aboue 1000. knights, that leauing their tilt, onely procured his death. But he so demeaned himself among them, that in a trise he beate to the ground aboue twentie sore wounded: and yet his men could not come to help him, by reason of the multitude that had inclosed him. Then Arfileo seeing this, most valiantly prickt forth with his troupe, and don Gallaneo, that nought imagined but their deaths, brandeshing his truncheon, made against him with all his battell, that don Bryanell might not bee succoured: the like did the Duke Alfyron with the remnant of his men, and in the midst of the field they met with such force, that most of them wished themselues farre thence at that time. The Duke & the two knights straight entered among their aduersaries, performing it verie brauely. But Arfileo that had no other intent then to helpe don Bryanell, passed through the thickest of the squadron, that none durst withstand him, and entred within their ring, where they slew their horses, procuring the like by them. But they beganne to make such destruction of them, that they had laid at their feete aboue a hundred knights, some slaine outright, and some grieuously wounded: and al that beheld the fight, thought it ill done that so many knights should onely set vpon two, insomuch that the Soldane was about to descend and part them. Where we leaue them, for we must a while discourse what befell Don Bellianis in his lodging.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

What happened Don Bellianis in the Dukes Pallace, with Galfeo the vnknowne and his Knights: his death, with the end of the Tourney.

SO soone as Don Gallaneo was departed to the Tourney, his cosin Galfeo the vnknowne took the fiftie knights, & wēt to the Duks lodging, hauing vnderstood by his spies how he was thence going, and that the knight of the golden Image remained there alone, where being arriued, hee commaunded his men to follow him vp: but then Don Bellianis hauing put on the Dukes armour, was readie to go to the tilt, thinking it time to be gone. But hearing a noyse at the gate, loked out at a windew falling vppon the stayres, and seeing so many knights there, was amazed, and with a loude voyce saide: what seeke you here knights, at such time when all are gone to the tourney. Don Galfeo loked vp, and seeing him in that armour, knew him not, and dissembling his intent, sayd. Good knight, I pray you shew vs him of the golden Image, for we must needes speake with him. You may not enter here (sayde hee) for the Duke my maister hath so commanded. And hauing so sayde, went towards the staires in great hall, wher he foūd don Galfeo entering the gallerie, and drawing foorth his Sword, sayd. It is in vaine knight, whatsoeuer thou art, to passe further here, thou or anie else, without the Duke my Maisters leaue. Don Galfeo hereat conceiued such ire by these wordes, that also drawing foorth his Sword sayde. Downe with the treacher that will denie vs the entrie. But Don Bellianis with his sword put himself among them, that in little space with great furie and force he slew aboue thirtie of them: which so amazed the rest, that they began

to

to retire backe as farre as the staires. But with the furie that possessed Don Bellianis hee so handled them, that in an euill houre they came to seeke him: & seeing don Galfeo aboue the rest troubled him, strooke him such a blow on the sword arme, that cut in two it fel on the earth: & after he gaue him another on the head, that he cleft it down to his eies. Neuer was there seene a knight behaue himselfe better among so many. But they preased on him in such sort, that he had like to haue bin greatly indãgered: yet he driuing them all before him down staires, made such distraction of them, that for verie hast they tumbled one vpon another: & he seeing them giue backe, followed them out of the pallace, & in their despight did beate them into a broade yarde, thinking better to defend himselfe there then in so close a rome: where he so vsed the strength of his mighty armes, that he got a horse, of many that ran lose, wherwith he renewed his mallacring of them. There was alreadie gathered much people of the Citie with their weapons, not knowing ỹ cause why so many were assembled in the dukes pallace, & when they saw them all vppon one knight, they helped him. Don Gallaneos knights, with more thẽ the third part of their fellowes dead, and seeing Don Galfeo slaine, and how their treason for that time could not be effected, by the extreame valour of that knight, fled away. Don Bellianis not willing to follow them, turned towards the Dukes pallace, where taking one of them, he set his sword to his throate, & threatned to kil him if he denied ỹ cause of their comming in that maner to seeke the knight of the goldẽ image, & in presence of many of the city he confessed, how, commanded by their Lord Don Gallaneo, they came to murther him. What meant your Lord by doing so? (said don Bellianis) I know no more then I haue said (replied the man.) Then bee praised (said don Bellianis) that your Lords trecherie hath not taken effect. Then mounting his horse, he rid to the tilt-yard, where he looked on euerie side, & sawe how the dukes men retired backe: seeking for the Princes Arbileo and Don Bryanel, and not seeing them, he toke a big launce, & put himself against

don Gallaneos knights, & the first he met he ouerthrew to the ground, doing the like by aboue thirtie before he brake it, and incouraging the Dukes saying troupes, renewed their fight so fiercely vpon the Courtiers, that they feared to lose what they had before wonne. And like a man distract, not seeing his companions, so wounded his aduersaries, that happie was hee that furthest could get from him, wherby euerie one made him ample passage to go by, for neuer a blow he gaue either with sword or lance, but he ouerthrew a knight. Which the Sophie seeing, cryed out: Oh mightie Mahomet, what admirable strength is this of your knight. But all this while Don Gallaneo and his knights had so roundly beset Don Brianell and Arsileo, that it was impossible they should escape aliue, though most valiantly they defended themselues. When there arriued a knight to Don Gallaneo, and in his eare told him all that befell his cosin Don Galfeo with Don Bellianis, who being not far off from them, he poynted to him and sayd. This is the knight that so hath massacred your men. Don Gallaneo turning to see him, sawe how with an incredible furie hee assayled his knights that had incompassed the Princes, and that with foure blowes hee stroke downe foure knights, and making little account of the rest, alighted, and seeing they would not suffer the Princes to mount a horseback, sayd, that euerie one might heare: Sette vppon this my horse Prince Arsileo, for since with so great trecherous cowardize you are vsed, make it knowne euen on they deerest liues. They knowing his voyce, conceiued such ioy, that almost they knewe not what they did: who going about to take a fresh horse, so many knights layde on them, that they could not doo it. Which Don Bellianis seeing, and howe it wared late to be reuenged on Don Gallaneo, taking Don Brianell in his armes, in despight of all the knights sette him on his horse: and beeing on his owne, with rage and thirstie furie of long desired reuenge, begamne such destruction on them, that hee made wide passage for himselfe and his companions. And seeing

two

two Gyants come against him, of foure which Don Gallaneo hadde brought to the Joustes for the purpose aforesayde, hee prepared for them, and receiuing one of theyr blowes on his sheeld, that was so cruell that it cutte it in peeces, hee so wounded the other with like strength, that falling on his fingers it cutte them off cleane with the mace hee heide: but the other did second so huge a stroke, that hee was forced to holde by his horse necke. There was neuer Tiger seene more fierce, nor Lion more furious, then Don Bellianis seemed, who raysing himselfe on the stirrops, and holding his sword with both hands, gaue him such a terrible blow on his thigh, that it entered as far as the bone, wherewith he shortly after died. What knight so valiant may this be (replied the Soldane, y doth such wonders, I would willingly haue had the knight of the golden Image here, y he might trie his force with this. That knights deeds be not comparable to these (said the princesse Persiana to her father the more to couer her intent of any thing that might after happen: for wel she knew that Don Bellianis would be in that battell, & so iudged that was he. But he following in search of Don Gallaneo, founde him at last not farre from the Soldanes scaffolde, where likewise the Princesse was, and as a swift hounde that hath his game on foote, fearing to lose it, so did he against Don Gallaneo, wh' also made towards him, and meeting, stroke each other such puissant blowes, that the sparkles of fire flewe from their armour. But don Gallaneo tumbled to the grounde sore wounded. When don Bellianis so sawe him, hee suddainely alighted from his horse: so did many of don Gallaneos knights, to helpe theyr maister. Then arriued the Duke Alfiron with foure thousand knights, and sette so furiously vppon them, that maugre their force, hee made them retyre back. In which time Don Bellianis wounded him againe, wherewith the sword fell out of his hand. And the duke seeing him on foot, & that to be the time for his reuenge, came against his horse, and ouerturned him flatte on the ground, & trampled twise or thrise on him with his horses foote,

making him breath his laſt. Which the Souldane ſeeing, cryed out, commanding him he ſhuld not hurt him: but the Duke made as though he heard him not. Whereupon the Souldane ſeeing the litle account was made of him, like to burſt with extreame greefe, deſcended, ſtill more and more renewing his laments for Don Gallaneos death: crying kill kill the traytors, that ſo villainouſly in my preſence murthered my ſonne. All the people at the Souldanes commaund, ſet on the Duke and don Bellianis: whence the Iouſts beganne, for trymphe and pleaſure were turned to death and diſtruction, that the fieldes flowed with bloud.

The kings of Armenia and Perſia that ſawe the battell ſo hot and cruell, went to the Souldane and ſaid to him, (Suffer not dread Soureign) all this company to periſh, ſeeing you know the Duke hath as much power to defend, as you to offend him. Therefore commaund the fight to ceaſe: for if the Duke be guiltie of Don Gallaneos death, you may by lawe convict him. The Souldane knowing it to be ſo, and that before the Duke dyed by that meanes, none would remaine with life, toke this counſaile, and commaunding the battell there to end, ſaid thus to the Duke. Get you out of my Perſepolis, (Duke) vnleſſe you will heere dye, vnheard, and vnexcuſed.

The Prince Don Bellianis ſeeing with him, bad him obey the Souldanes commaunde, aſſuring himſelfe their purpoſe could not but haue a good end. The Duke taking his counſaile, very ioyfully commaunded the retrayt to be ſounded: whereat the knights as well of the one as of the other partie, left their fight, returning euery one to their Captaine, attending his commaund. Who were here able to expreſſe what great gladneſſe the Princeſſe Perſiana conceiued with *Don* Gallaneos death: which leaſt, it might be diſcerned, called out vpon all the knights of her gard, to impriſon, and bring before her ý Duke, and the knight that committed that trecherie. The guarde replyed they might not, becauſe the Souldane was there: who returned

returned extreame sorrowfull, and so furious with rage, that very fire seemed to sparkle from his eyes, that all which beheld were astonied at his sterne lokes. And although the kings of Tessiffaney intreated him to returne to his pallace, yet hee could like no counsaile, saue what sauoured of reuenge. But turning to the dead bodye, sawe his Daughter bewayle his vntimely death, and knowing she alwaies refused willingly to marry him, and now seeing her greeuous laments, for his decease, suspected it was done by her appointment, and not regarding his Fathers loue, but gouerned with rage, toke her from the ground and said.

It bootes thee not nowe Princesse to dissemble, for I am sure don Gallaneo was slaine with your consent, and since you would not obeye mee when I would, I will now punish you as you deserue.

Whereuppon hee commaunded her to bee shut vppe in a Tower and surelye guarded, not hearing her speak. And going thence, commaunded all the people of the Cittie to arme them, intending to imprison the Duke in his house, imagining don Gallaneos death had bin with his consent: & greatly greeued because hee coulde not knowe that Knight that so indaungered him in the battell, not thinking on don Bellianis, hauing left him sore wounded.

CHAP. XVIII.

What happened to don Bellianis without Perſepolis. How he deliuered two damſels from certain knights & whēce they were: and how he ſlew the dragon of the Riphean wood.

THe Duke ſeeing his purpoſe thither to ſort as he wiſhed, with don Gallaneos death, reſolued altogither to follow the counſaile of the knight of the golden image. Whereupon he returned to his pallace: and the night hauing darkened the world, don Bellianis left him in the plaine fielde, fayning to goe out of the Citie, though all the knights there indured to ſtay him, deſiring to know him ere he went. But getting from them all, eſcaped out of the Citie, the better in that obſcuritie to returne vnknowne to his lodging: and he had not gone far, but his wounds began extreamely to greeue him, inſomuch he could not ſtay himſelfe on horſebacke. for with their new bleeding, they opened, making him ſeeme a fountain with ſo many ſprings: & ſeeing himſelf ſo ill, he thought he ſhuld not be able to return to Perſepolis, vnleſſe his woūds were bound vp. And ſo alighting from his horſe, hee ſawe two damſels come towards him, ryding in ſuch haſte as he thought they did rather fly then on their palfrayes ſwiftly runne. Don Bellianis putting himſelfe afore them, ſaid. What is the cauſe (fayre Ladies) that maketh you ryde ſo faſt? Oh for Gods ſake ſtaye vs not, but if you will ſaue your life followe vs, and by the waye wee will declare the whole circumſtance vnto you. Heere will it be better (ſaid he) and among theſe trees you may hide your ſelues. So they taking his counſaile, followed his aduice, & beginning to diſcouer their aduēture: loe they perceiued through thoſe trees a terrible Dragon, ſo fearfull in ſight, that it ſtruck amazement in the beholders, and although the night were

were very dark, yet such light issued frō him, through the great abundance of fire proceeding from his iawes, that it seemed his mouth opened to swallow them at that instant. The Ladies being ouercome with feare, betoke thēselues about the knight of the golden Image, hauing lost the power of their pretended flight. But he seeing it was no time to be idle, rose frō the groūd with his sword in hand, and made against that hellish monster, at that time wishing rather to haue his armor giuē him by Bellona buckled about his body, thē be inuested Emperor of a larger Empyre then his fathers. At this instant the dragō with an infernal fury, flying against him, ouerthrew him with his breast, & returning to catch him with his talēts, to pluck him in peeces. He whō feare neuer could blind, lept aside, but with great difficulty for being ouerreached, the cruel beast wō one of his pawes drew him to him, & pearst both armor and flesh, euen to ỳ bones with his deadly claws: but the knight forsaking his sword stabd his dagger 4. or 5. times into his heart vnder his wings. The fearful beast through extremitie of pain left him, stretching himselfe, & labouring in the pangs of death. He was of such a wonderful greatnes, that he was aboue 25. feet lōg, in bignes biger then a great bull, whose like was neuer seene by any. After the knight of the golden image had finished this hautie deed, & most vnequall fight, he fell on his knees, rendring thanks to his heauenly protector, that had deliuered him from so great danger, though with feare to scape the perill of his mortall wounds, wondring how he had blood left in his veines, hauing lost such great quantitie therof. And going to the damzels that with feare were not able to flie, he said. Feare now no more (faire Ladies) for the causer of your timorous traunce, shall put you in no further perill. They recouering their benummed senses, scarce knowing what to say, the one lifting vp her voice replied. We cannot (sir knight) eppresse the many thanks due by vs, for this so great good worke, whose greatnes our merits can neuer deserue, vnlesse by memorating through the earth your high prowesses, that the perpetuall remembrance of this ample act may

neuer

neuer be drowned in the blacke center of obliuion. And seeing (as it should seeme) you were before wounded, we beseech you to withdraw your selfe within this forrest, that being vnseen of passengers, we may dresse them. I will obey any thing you shal command (said he) and so sleeping among those trees, they disarmed him, and began to search his wounds (being very skilful in that misterie) and greatly meruailed how it had bin possible he escaped death: yet though dispairing of his safetie, performed their dutie with all diligence, and hauing dressed his woundes, they demanded what he determined to do. To whome he answered. We will presently to the Citie, that I may there haue my wounds cured: But how came you hither? said they, beeing thus wounded: whereto he answered Doubting I should be bloodlesse through the great quantitie that thereof I had lost, and through faintnesse, being able to goe no further, heere I stayed to binde them. Shall we (said they) take your Armour with vs to the citie? No, leaue it here replyed he) I little neede it respecting the occasion of my going thyther. And so mounting on horsebacke (but with much paine) and the Damsels on their palfraies, he by the way thus spake. Tell me I pray you the occasion of your flight, when I first met you? To whome they answered. You shall know (Sir Knight) we do belong to the most excellent peerelesse and aboue all the most fayre, the fayrest Princesse Floresbella, that hauing sent vs to a wise woman, whose habitacion is farre hence, on a most craggy and barren Mountaine (and Bellona is her name) to knowe the fortunes of a beauteous Princesse conducted by her (called Aurora, of whom since that time no newes hath beene heard, through the death of King Pompeiano her father, trayterously slaine by Don Gallaneo, and his Kingdome wonne by a sonne of this Sophye, called the knight of the images: And we hauing heard that the said Sophy now marryeth his Daughter, to the saide don Gallaneo, disguisedly we came to see the said festiuals: and comming not far hence, we were sodainly surprised by a most fearefull gyant accompanied with some

twenty knights almost in bignesse like himselfe: who hauing taken vs, (in the knights approach) spying a launce of some 20. knights. wee crying to them for helpe, yeelded to our request. But the Gyant and his knights at the first incounters vnhorst aboue the halfe of them. And so wee foreseeing the ill successe like to insue, betooke our selues to the swift courses of our palfrayes, till wee met you. And now, (Sir knight) for all wee discourst the successe of our fortunes, yet still feare the ouertaking of those vnciuill knights: because through our weakenes wee are like to suffer the cruell stroke of none sparing death. So approaching neere the cittie, they descryed three men clad all in armour, who hauing them within viewe, knewe the Damzells: whereat they saide. Our trauell is now at an ende, for wee haue found what wee sought.

The Ladies perceiuing them to bee Gyants knights, were like to fall from their palfrayes: to whome the knight said. Yee now shall not scape vs, but shall go to our Lord and Maister the Gyant Fillistore, that sends for you. Don Bellianis became exceeding wrath, seeing himselfe both sore wounded and without armour: yet he thus saide to them. In courtesie (braue knights) I pray you oppose not your violent handes against poore distressed Ladies, that with mee are going. We thought (replyed they) you would content your selfe with your owne liberty, medling not with theirs: but since you wold not know when you were well, you shall also goe with vs: wherewith they would haue bound him. He perceiuing ỹ his courteous wordes preuailde not, stepped to one and snatched his launce out of his hand in dispight of him and his fellowes, tumbling him headlong to the ground. The others would haue stricken him with their speares: but he warily scaped their blowes, and fiercely running at one, he thrust the launce through his body, that lifelesse hee measured his length on the earth. The third strake at him so mightily, that had hee not lightlye stept aside (beeing as hee went vnarmed) hee had made his launce appeare at his backe: yet neuerthelesse he ranne his speare

through his thigh: so he feeling himselfe sore wounded, drewe his never failing sword, and gaue him so cruell a blow on his shoulders, that hee cut him downe right, that his parted bodie fell on each side of his horse. Don Bellianis going to dismount, to dispatch him that first fell, felt his thigh pind to his Saddle with a truncheon of the Speare: but seeing the Knight did not sturre, left him. All this while the Damzell stoode amazed with wonder, seeing such destruction in so short time, and with extreame ioy they thus sayde. Wee can neuer ende (sir Knight) the celebrating of your most high and more then humane chiualries, though thereby we be not credited, which for all our selues haue seene them, yet their admiration so astonisheth vs. that we scarce dare acknowledge them for true. Hee hearing himselfe thus commended replied. Ouerpassing these vnworthy prayses, let vs (faire Ladies) enter the citie, for my great woũds require spẽdy remedy: and know ỹ your trauel is now ended: for I do belong vnto the Princesse Aurora: whõ when you see before any, dissemble her knowledge, for her present occasions so require it. They ioyful of such newes, answered they would. And so keeping on their pace, they came to the Dukes pallace, where they found al the knights in armor. Don Bellianis discouering himself to a knight intreated to lead him to his lodging, if he could, vnknowne to the duke til the next morning. Who replied, he might not, for the duke staid for him with the rest of the knights, not minding to sleepe vntil his cõming. The hẽ helpe me off my horse (said don Bellianis.) The knight going to do it, spied the spears truncheon, which he had not taken away, fearing to blẽd himself to death. And the knight said: you are so sore wounded, that it were best I cal the duke. Vnhorse me first (said don Bellianis) & take out this truncheon. The knight did so, which was so imbrued in his blood, wherwith it stuck so fast in his flesh, that the drawing thereof so extreamly increased his pain, that after he was not able to stand, but was caried in two knights arms, into the hal, wher they fẽd ỹ duke, with many other Lords: also accompanied with the princes don Brianell,

and

and Arfileo, who though they were greatly wounded, were determined presently to ride in demaund of the knight of the golden Image, if they heard not of him. But seeing him come into the hall in that maner, waxed pale, thinking him wounded to death, and ran to him. And the princesse Aurora that first spied him, was first that approached, who with teares in great aboundance trickling downe her ivory-rosed cheekes, to see him in such danger: without impeach of any, and respect of none, fell on her knees before him, kissing his hands, both with ioy and greefe, insomuch that in her good will towardes him it may be beleeued she passed his cosen Arfileo. The prince don Bellianis raising hir from the ground, and most kindly imbracing hir, said. Vse not so much vndeserued courtesie (most soueraigne ladie) to so meane a knight, of such small fame as my selfe, whose litle seruices will neuer merit any of these fauors, except in costing mee as one of your meanest seruitors. Then were these greetings interrupted by Don Brianell, and the rest, that receiued him with no lesse courtesies & imbracings, thē if he were their generall cōmander, especially the duke, who nēds would welcome him on his knees, though he knewe not his high discent, saue that he acknowledged he had by his means repossest his whole estate, & life, and with infinit gladnes he thus began. I greatly wonder most renowmed knight of the golden image) how you were able to be at the tourney, after I here sawe the great prowesse by you done. To whom he replied, I haue (most excellent Duke) done no act worthie your memorie. So wil said he) none of Don Galfeos knights affirme. For at our returne we found aboue two hundred of them with their maisters slain. And we intreat you to dilate vnto vs the cause of their cōming to our Pallace, and what after happened to you since your departure, hauing staid so long, returning thus cruelly wounded. Then thus (replied hee) they purposed treacherously to murther me, though by the helpe of the immortall Gods, their intent was frustrated. The rest I am not able to discourse, for my wounds will not permit mee: but of these Ladies shall you knowe the euent of all things, whose good intertainment I

request euen as to my Lady and Mistresse the Princesse heere present.

Whereuppon Don Bellianis was carryed to his lodging, and layde in his bed, where by the Damzells hee was againe dressed, who greatly wondred at his many and dangerous woundes: and hauing done, they left him alone, quietlye to take his rest: for his extreame paine, chiefly of the wound of his thigh, made him rore like a bul bayted with many dogs. The Ladies beeing come foorth, were most curteously entertained of the Lordes, greatly admyring the haughty deedes they heard of that valorous knight. Straight were the tables couered (good order beeing giuen for the Pallaces safety) and they all sat downe to supper, where the Damzells discoursed the acts of the knight of the goulden image, in their presence done, saying. Scarce dare wee report his admirable Cheualries, least our wordes bee not credited: yet haue wee beene eye witnesses of his deedes. Then were they intreated by the knights to vnfold them, saying that if they had seene what him before happened. they would little esteeme those they seared to rehearse.

There can none bee comparable to t hese (o f Damzels:) and therefore will wee satisfie you: & so recounted all that him befell after they met with him, with words of high renowne, to the eternising of his glorie. Whosoeuer shal heare (sayde the Duke) the admyring wonders of this knight, may hardly beleeue them: And sure I am, no knight will euer performe what hee hath done in so short time: and so reiterating al his exploytes (as heerebefore are set downe.) Oh what Posterity will beleeue in future ages these no lesse great then admirable prowesses, of this not onely victorious, but happy and neuer sufficient praised knight. These and such like matters did these Princes treate of at table concerning Don Bellianis. The Princesse had by this knowne the Damzels: and they her, yet eyther thought the contrary by their silence. But the Prince (imagining the cause was, that they were so forewarned

forewarned by don Belhanis, said she would withdraw herselfe to rest, and take those Damzells with her, and was conducted to their chamber. The knights after her departure setled themselues to the ordering of all their necessaries, touching their menaced peril: for they had intelligence how the Sophy hauing vnderstood of don Galfeos death, at his departing from the turney, by some of the scaped knights: yet not informed of the trueth, but that going to the Dukes Pallace to accompany him to the turney, hee was there slaine. Whereupon willed al in the Citty should arme themselues. But the Duke and his faction little feared him: hauing within the said Citie aboue fifteene thousand knights his friendes all in armes, in readynes well appointed at commaund. The Princesse beeing in her chamber, made fast the doore, before whom the damzels humbled themselues, craning to kisse her handes: But she not suffering it, imbraced thē with great ioy, to whom they thus spake.

What hath become of your royall person? Oh most excellent Madame, whose losse wee could not but imagine, hauing beene so toste and subiect to misfortunes, and calamities? Wee cannot (great Princesse declare the sufficiencie of our ioy conceiued with your presence. And no lesse will the Princesse Florisbella receiue: who onely for this cause sent vs to our Aunt the sage Bellona: Wherefore wee beseech you, tell vs who these knights bee, whose personages, compositions, and excellent conditions deserue admiration, especially hym that brought vs to the inioying of your company. I (replyed she) knowe no other, but that I met them in a most strange place, and I thanke the immortall Gods, vnconstrained they condiscended to the promise of their aydes, & already my fathers most vnfortunate death hath partly beene reuenged, for this knight hath slaine Don Gallaneo. And thus continued their chat without sleeping, till the better twoo partes of the night were paste.

CHAP. XIX.

What the Sophy did after the battell: and how the greene armour of Don Bellianis was brought him to the citty,

THere is no tongue able to expresse the greate greefe that the Sophy did conceiue by Don Gallaneo, and his Cosins death, whome he dearely loued: and seeing that the Duke kept within his Pallace, hee sent earlye the nexte morning aboue a thousand knightes to seeke him in the greene armour: for hee determined by all meanes to knowe who hee was, hauing vnderstood hee was not gone home with the Duke.

The knightes obeying his commaund, came to the place where the vgly monstrous beast laye slaine, the sight whereof so feared their horses, that not able to staye them, in dispight of their ryders, they ranne away with them. The like timorousnes surpryzed the knights, beholding the monstrousse of the dragon, that they durst not approach to discerne what he was: yet seeing hee stirred not, one of them taking Hart-a-grace, esteeming himselfe lesse fearefull then the rest, alighted on foote, and trembling went where the dead beast lay, and seeing him not moue, with the huge quantity of blood wherein he wallowed, called his companions, bidding them not feare, for it was not aliue: who well viewing it, were greatly astonished to see so deformed a thing, and searching where hee had beene strucken, they sawe his woundes aboue the legges and winges, whereby they iudged the knight that had slaine him, could not but bee sorely hurt, by beeing so nigh, that y wounds shewed they had beene beene made with a dagger. And one following the signes of the bloode, found the Damzels mantells, that they had left, with the knights armour, which presently they knewe, and assured themselues hee slewe that most

vgly

ogly beast: in respect whereof they nothing esteemed what hee had performed to their costes in the turney, with the sight of ỹ prodigious and infernall monster slaine by his handes. And so they tooke great compassion on him for the much blood hee there had shed: & so finding no signe nor tracing of his, to finde him, and seeing him armourlesse, resolued to returne vnto the Sophy, and tell him what they had seene, presenting him the knights armour, and the damzells mantells: Wherewith going out of the wood, lighted on the two knightes slaine, and turning them ouer, much mused at the horrible blowe which the one had, whose like they neuer had seene before: and going away, they met with foure knights, that knowing the Damzells mantells, said: Wee beseech you (gentle knights) tell vs where wee may finde the Ladies, owners of those mantells. Wee know not (sayde they) but why doe you demaunde it? To know what became of a knight that accompanieth them. Why seeke yee him? (demaunded they) for wee also would imploy the vtmost of our power to finde and carrye him to our Lord the Soldane. Then know (said the foure) that the Gyant Fillistone (wel knowne of you) commaunded vs to finde him, to giue him his due chastisement: Though truely yester night hee performed such an attempt, that wee beleeue there breatheth not in the vniuerse any able to doe the like: for three knights of our company going to seeke those damzells (which from vs fledde, and about to take them against his will. wounded these two as you see, leauing the other on the earth little better then dead. And since wee vnderstood they be all within the Citty.

Then go along with vs: for if they be there, they cannot be hid. And besides these things hee hath done others of greater admiration. So in such talke they continued their way to the Citty, till they arryued at the Soudanes Pallace, who seeing the knights armour, thought they also brought him: which greatly gladded him, descending halfe way to meete them, demaunded for the knight: to whom they answered. We bring

him

him not (right mighty Soueraigne) but come to tell you the greatest wonder ẏ euer you heard of, for hee alone hath put to death the mighty Dragon of the Ryphean woodes, your whole kingedomes destruction. Oh mightye Ioue (saide the Soldane) who may beleeue, but with great difficulty such a thing, except his eyes should see it. Surely (dread Lord) it is so (replyed they) and wee iudge by the great abundance of of blood in that place shed, that he cannot but be almost deade. Moreouer hee hath done another acte of no lesse wonder: for coming vnarmed with our two Damzells, hee combated with three knights, and vanquisht them, cleauing one downe right in the middle, and it is also said that hee came vnto the cittie. The Soldane stood musing with himselfe whither the knight of the golden Image might bee he, disguisedly entring the tourney for the Dukes sake. Yet thought hee this vnlikely, knowing hee remained sore wounded at the combate had with the knights of the vnhappy bridge. But still perswaded himselfe it should be hee, imagining no knight in all the citie so hardy, as for to attempt the like. And seeing the knight could not be found, he commanded all the people of the cittie to armes, and came to his Pallace, for he determined to assault the Duke: who fearing the same, had all his men in readines. Great was the hurlyburly through the cittie among the popularity inquiring one of another what they should doe, forseeing some cruell battell to be impendent ouer their heades.

CHAP. XX.

How the kings of Armenia and Tesifanty conferred with the Sophe of the order taken betweene them, about the Duke: and how he presented himselfe before the Sophy.

THe doubtful state of these tumultious cares on eyther side, hanging on ẏ vncertaine arbitrating sentence of fortune: the rumour of the comunalty of the Citty seemed no lesse then if the vtter ruine therof were euidently knowne. Wherby the Soldan supposing many inclyning to the dukes faction, proclaymed by sound of trumpet, that none should aide nor

nor saue him on paine of death, and take him for a traitor, for he onely purposed to do according to law and iustice, if hee were found guiltie. The beauteous Princesse Persiana well heard of these proceedings, whose woes for them penetrated her tender heart, though it was thought she sore lamented, because her father had imprisoned her. But shee sending for the Kinges of Arminea and Tessifantie, they presently went to her, who being alone, admitted them to her presence, whom she with manie teares intreated to become mediators betwixt the Soldan and the duke, & that they would not consent to the terminating of those affaires to be by the euent of warre, seeing in the ende she only should be the only loser, her honor being tossed to and fro on such vndesent trials. They with great willingnes promised to do the vttermost of their possibilitie: and seeing the matter suffered no delay, and that they likewise ventured some part of their owne, in that they were the dukes neare allies, did then take leaue of the princesse, and departed towards the Soldan, whom they found with all his men readie to march. So approching to him, he greatly reioyced with their presence, thereby thinking they wold ioine with him, supposing at first they were gone to the duke. Whereupon he courteously made out to meet them: who (their customed honor performed) humbled themselues to kisse his hands: but he would not by any means consent thereto: whereat they thus began. Alas (dread Lord) what pretends these your troupes, whose sudden armes cannot but threaten death, & vtter desolatiõ to this citie: but most of al what meanes your selfe to be in person in so dãgerous an enterprise, hauing so many hardy knights able to attempt any important action at your cõmand? I haue neuer (replied the Sophy) whose dutieus seruice & loyaltie to me hath deserued such cõfidence as these affaires require, specially since the absence of the prince my son. And well may you see the treason done against mee by the duke: for I am sure it was both by his consent, & my daughters cõmand done, & am certain that he which all these harmes hath wrought, is the knight of the golden image, & so discoursed

what he had vnderstood of the knights, and how he was so sore wounded, that his life was in suspence, and also that he was the same that slue Don Galseo. All which was true: for the distressed knight was in such case, that all his companions greatly doubted his recouerie: for which their sorrow was so great, that they wished to disburden themselues therof, they might be euen in their enemies chiefest troops. For in readinesse & willingnesse of mind, they wanted nought but the beginning of the conflict. The two kings not a litle maruailed at the Soldans discourse. Whereupon the King of Armenia, take occasion to speake as followeth. The knight of the golden Image, is not in that greatnesse of fault as you iudge him in (most mighty Lord:) for if you would but in the equall ballance of right reason, weigh the cause you may plainly see how greatly Don Gallaneo laboured to kill the aduenterous knight, and the Prince Arsileo, against all the lawes and rights of Turney, nought regarding your awfull clamours to the contrarie: but then more procured their deaths: whereat no marueil if the knight of the golden Image, and the Duke, in thir owne defence did slay him. And we know, that the knight in the græne armour was he of the golden Image, for we learned it of some of them that fled when don Galseo died, that he which slue him, and vanquished them, was the same that returned victor of the Turney. So that you may well thinke he determined to do by them, what they did to him, and his. Of all which things you should better informe your selfe, before you come to these extreames. But if notwithstanding, you will persever in these rigorous determinations, consider the many thousand deaths thereby like to ensue: for the Duke will indure no wrong. Remember also (great Lord) the knight of the golden Image is he (though the chiefest cause of Don Gallaneos death) that freed you from two great inconueniences, one from the aduenture of the vnhappie Bridge, the other by the death of the Ryphean dragon, and that hereof consisteth your owne honour in your daughters innocencie, and that the Duke may plead his cause, and we our selues will go

with

with him, and procure this matter to be tried by combat, or by any other means by you thought fitter, which if you grant, you shall eternally bind vs to your allegiance. If you cause the duke (replied the Sophy) to come and submit himselfe, I promise you there shall be no wrong proffered him, nor any thing contrarie to the right of law & iustice, which I onely do, that if any of Don Gallanços kindred should expect any reuenge at my hands for his death, they may know what I haue done herein. And hereupon I pawne my kingly faith, and royall word vnto you. Then said they, vppon this order you may dismisse your men vnto their seuerall homes: for we will performe what we haue promised. Whereupon the Soldane commanded euerie man to retyre to his quarter, he himselfe going to his Court, to expect the kings returne, who straight repayred to the Dukes Pallace, where they greatly reioyced to see the good order, and care by them kept: insomuch that the Soldan was not there able to enter by force of armes, though he brought all his forces redoubled. They being their demaunded for the Duke, and vnderstanding that he was in don Bellianis Chamber, thither went to speake with him: where they saw how the knight of the golden Image had his wounds by those Damzels dressed. The duke receiued them according to their state, & would haue led them into another roome, but they would not, loking on the kings wounds, which they iudged the greatest ỳ euer they had seene, wherat they much sorowed, supposing he wold not scape them, though they were greatly satisfied to see with what nimblenes those ladies dressed him. And hauing don, they thus said: with such surgeons (sir knight) you ought to feele halfe the paine inforced by your wounds: wherto he answered. It is so great lords) for though I should feele neuer so much, this is double cõfort vnto me, for else I should not be made happie with the fruition of your royall presence, ioyntly with the dutie you bind me to, in vouchsafing the remembrance of so meane a knight, being thus pitiously wounded, & not able to leaue my bed to imploy my self in these troublesom affaires of my lord ỳ duke. Take no

care for them. Sir knight, said the king of Trifilfantie, for we come to none other effect, and hope we shall haue no great deniall about them, and though we should find any contradiction, yet the duke shal be so fauored, as he shal reasonably doubt nothing that may to him happē. And they declared ỹ maner of the appointment made with the Soldane, so that the dukes iustice should be euidently seene, and be at libertie to answere all obiections, or else present his champion to trie it in the battell, against whosoeuer should at his hands demaund the death of Don Gallaneo, and that in meane space, the duke would yeld himselfe to prison or we for him: all which was betweene him and vs so agreed. And know (Sir knight) it is certainely bruted abroad, that he which vanquished the Tourney and was cause of Don Gallaneos death, with his cosins Don Galfeo, and that slew the Riphian Dragon, and the Giants Filistones three knights, is your self. Don Bellianis somwhat altered his countenance hearing this, yet seeing the Sophie and others knewe all his doings, faintly made this replie. First (mightie Lordes) haue a care in what they demaund of the Duke, and after wee shall haue time if I escape these woūds to prouide for al things else. And moreouer, on my faith, the Soldan deales vnaduisedly and vniustly in his demaunds against the Duke, and should not make account of two such traitors as Don Gallaneo and Galfeo, whom if in case I did slay, I did verie well, considering with what trecherie the one would haue murthered me in my bed, and the other my companions in the Tourney: and had I bin in that state at more ease, I had better with my deeds shewen, what I cannot so well now expresse in words. They were all amazed to see with what passion Don Bellianis pronounced these speeches, and they perceiuing hee had reason, would proceed no further in that talke, but turning to the duke, prayed him to resolue with himselfe to do what they required. I will do (replied he) neither more nor lesse in any thing, then what the knight of the golden Image shall commaund me. I humbly kisse your hand (sayde he) for this your high fauour, though

though in all things else it is well knowne that my dutie binds me to obey you. But to our matter: I am of opinion, sauing better iudgement, and reposing our confidence on the royall words of these great kings, you may fearelesse present your selfe before the Soldane: for I trust you shall haue no iniurie offered you. Thereof be assured (said the kings) for so the Soldane hath vowed. The damsels that came with don Bellianis, after he killed the dragon, stepping to him, sayde. Wee haue heard (Sir knight) the Princesse Persiana is in a strong tower imprisoned, by the commandement of the Soldane her father: wherefore consider what best in this case may be done, talking as little as you may, because of indangering your woundes and your selfe. When the duke was departing, don Bellianis called to him Don Bryanell and Arsileo, and prayed them to accompanie the duke, and answere for the Princesse Persiana and himselfe, as occasion should be offered. They being all readie, straight toke their way to the Soldanes pallace, leauing the knight of the golden Image in talke with the Princesse Aurora, and Florisbellas damsels, which were both beautifull and wittie, greatly admiring his courage and magnanimitie, frō whose presence they were not parted day nor night, but had placed their beds a little from his, the better to watch and help him at his needs, who (excepting the diuine powers of the omnipotent God) were cause of his health, being in that science both singular and excellent.

CHAP. XXI.

What happened to the Duke with the Soldane. Howe the Knight of the golden Image and the Princesse Persiana were challenged for the deaths of don Gallaneo and Galfeo, by the fearefull Felistone and his brethren: and howe the challenge was accepted.

SO soone as the duke was arriued at the Soldanes pallace, with the companie mentioned in the precedent Chapter,

and thinking it vnmeet to aduertise him therof, they al dismounted, and on foot entred the great hall where the Sophy sat: who, when he saw him come with his blood changed in his face, as being the man that mortally hated the duke, which now being nigh him, humbled himself on his knees, requesting the killing of his royall hands. You need them not Duke (said the Sophy) since you account your deserts so meritorious, and of your self so highly, that I sending for you to appeare before me, vtterly denied it, and with all your power resisted my commandes. The Gods forbid I should haue committed any such offence (replied the Duke.) And well do you know (dread soueraigne) that I neuer esteemed in any your affaires, to hazard both life, and my whole estate in your seruice. But doubting (your highnesse being full of ire) wold not hear me, according to the iustice of my cause, I rather chose to withdraw my selfe vnto my lodging, where to this instant I remained: from whence I was now called by these noble knights, to appeare before your mightinesse. So being in this conference, there entred the hall three giants, the greatest, vglyest & fiercest that any humane nature could produce: they were al armed sauing ỹ heads, whose helms and shields were borne by their squires: on them attended 30. knights, not much inferior to thē in bignesse: all their outward garments were of mourning cloth, who went directly to the soldan, that throughly viewing them, greatly wondred at their mōstrous fiercenesse. Loe one that was most deformed, and seemed to command the rest, without dutie to the Soldan, began thus with a voice, whose hollow roring made all the hall resounde. High & mightie lord we beleeue that small is the notice come to your eares of vs, hauing but little traced thy dominiōs, although we haue endeuored with all our power, & the vttmost of our desire, the aduācing of your house by our seruice, wherof your son the prince Perianeo is a sufficient witnesse, as the man in the wars of Antioch being tearmed the knight of the Image, we ayded, of him may you know I am king of Cyprus, otherwise called Fellestone the fierce, brother to these knigts here present

that

that knowing you married the Princesse Persiana to our cosin don Gallaneo of Antioch, we came to honor his nuptials: and arriuing neere this citie, two of my knights, whō I sent to seeke two damzels of my companie, were slaine, by one which I vnderstood is called the knight of the golden Image, of whō there are also many tales bruted of their valour. Moreouer we were certified, that he and the duke Alfiron, slue in the turney most trecherously, the prince don Gallaneo, and his cosin don Galfeo. And thogh we are assured you wil execute on them the punishment that so vile treason requires (for wee haue vnderstood the imprisonment of your daughter the princesse Persiana, consenter to their deaths.) Notwithstanding, we being persons to whō this aforesaid matter concernes, do accuse as wel the duke as the knight of the golden Image, with the princesse Persiana your daughter, as authors, & actors of their deaths, and therfore traitors and malefactors. And I vow to approue it against thē both togither, or with what knight soeuer the princesse shall appoint in her defence: for I will not be coūted a giant nor king of the land where any of vs is knowne, if I make thē not presently cōfesse this their treason, that you may chastise it as you shall better iudge: and herewith ended his speech. The great rage conceiued by the knights, hearing themselues called traitors, cannot be sufficiently expressed. The Soldan vnderstanding of the Giant what he was, rose from his seate to intertain him, as his state required, intreating him to sit downe. It bootes not (said he) but only that ye send for these traitors, to answere my obiections: for I haue sworne not to put off my armor, till I be satisfied with my reuenge. The Duke stepping euen where the Giant was talking whō wher he better saw his deformitie and bignesse, for though himselfe were of a good stature, yet reached not to his middle) somewhat feared him: but remembring by what valiant knights he was backt, resolutely made this answer to the giants former speeches. If we had not heretofore heard, & now by experience seen thy great pride (king of Cipres) we had reasō to think no humane creature could haue procreated a thing

a thing so monstrous, and to her selfe so contrarie, though such as thou art are alwayes seene, from the offspring of so vilde a kinde, whereby thou seemest to colour thy euill grounded reasons, and arrogant pride, in ioyning kindred with the Soldan (our dread Soueraigne.) And if in case thou bee such a one, as thy speech declares, thou more obscurest with thy euill deedes his his royall progenie, then euer with wordes thou mayest amplifie it. Moreouer, know I am the Duke Alfyron, whom thou commest to accuse: and whereas thou sayest, I and the Knight of the golden Image haue trecherously slaine Don Gallaneo, I replie, thou most falsely lyest, which my selfe am readie to approue in battell, or present my Champion for the same. The Prince Arsileo all this while readie to choake with extreame rage, yet moderately sayde thus. Since thou art altogether ouerwhelmed in the treasons thou speakest off (Cyprus King) know that touching the knight of the golden Image, thou hast most falsely lied in thy throate, and therefore bring with thee in field one of thy brothers, or whom else thou wilt. For if thou wilt not stay vntill his wounds bee whole, my selfe in his place will approue the vtmost of thy speeches, to be meerelie false: for he is not a Prince nor knight that would haue procured Don Gallaneos death, except forced thereunto, through his great treasons and demerits, yet his Cosen, like a vilde traitour died treacherously, going to murther him in his bed. Don Brianell dissembling his anger, with a scoffing laughter, not suffring the King of Cyprus to replie, said to him. I thinke, King, knight, or Giant, or what thou wilt, thou thoughtest thy challenge would returne vnaccepted, because no knight might be here able in bignesse and deformne, to answere thee. And yet in my opinion, thy pride is farre greater then thy bodie. But passing this, knowe, that in the Princesse Persianaes name, I will make the thirde in Combatte againste thy brothers or thy selfe, to proue (with the helpe of the immortall Gods) that in the great vntroth breathed forth by thee, thou most treacherously liest.

And

And seeing we are all prepared to fight, be it presently whiles the passion of thy furiousnes is hot, least after thou doe excuse thy selfe by the weight of thy armour euerlong worne. The fearefull Gyant seeing with what courage and audacitie of speech those knights spake to him, was diuers times about to lay handes vppon his boysterous are, thereby to punish the lauish of their tongues, no more esteeming the combatte with a hundred of them, then doth the furious Bull a troupe of little whelpes, & being ready to burst with fury, vttered these words to the Soldane.

By the high powers of the Gods (dread Lord) if these sillye mad-men were not before thy sacred presence, I would haue inflicted such heauie punishment on them, that they should bee examples to all others as should presume to speake in such maner to any of my degree. But I will this once restraine my selfe, and expect the combate till the Knight of the golden image bee brought well of his woundes, that my reuenge may bee the greater: For I meane to wage the fight with all foure. Nor would I haue you repute my wordes vaine, for I haue diuers other times done the like against a hundred better then the best of them. Whereunto Don Brianell made this answere.

Doest thou confirme my former speeches in so long prolonging this fight, daring say thou wilt doe it against them all: knowing vs to be such knights that will not suffer one another to enter the fight with any such aduantage. Then the Soldan commaunded them all silence, saying: that the king of Cyprus accusing three knights, the like number must bee against him: to wit, the king and his two brethren, that shall agree thereto. Bee it as you shall command (said the King) and my two brothers shal accompany mee, though more willing I would haue had this combate my selfe, against three, or foure, or more, that they might thereby see how little I esteeme of them. Then the Soldane againe commaunded silence to bee kept, & called the two Lords of Armenia, & Telsifantie, with other Lordes, to

counsell, touching the confirmation of the challenge, which beeing ended, they returned, and commanding the knightes and Gyants to attend, he said: Hauing consulted concerning the accusation made by the king of Cyprus, against the Duke Alfiron, the knight of the golden Image, and my daughter, wee haue found hee may lawfully doe it, beeing as hee is, the mightiest of kindred that Don Gallaneo hath. And moreouer, because the Duke himselfe is accused, he may not in person enter the combatte: and so much for the knight of the golden Image.

Therefore it behoues you (Duke) to finde a Champion to vndertake this battell for you, seeing the Prince Arfileo doth it for the knight of the golden Image, and his companion, for my daughter, and it must bee forthwith.

Now though the Duke seemed outwardly displeased, being forbidden the combatte in person, yet was it not so, for hee greatly feared the Gyants forces: Neuertheleſſe, he answered the Soldan in this manner. Seeing I must seeke a Champion to defend my right, grant me some time (dread soueraigne) to doe it. I giue you (said the Soldan) twelue dayes, wherein looke to it, & consider on all thinges you shall neede, that after you complaine not, I haue done you iniustice. Then was the Princeſſe Perſiana sent for, that she would agree that the same knight should bee her defender. On this message went the Kinges of Armenia & Teſsifontie, and also to bring her, who acquainted her with all they had therein laboured, according to her request, and how the king of Cyprus being come to the Courte, had not accused her alone, but also the knight of the golden Image, and that the Soldan had sent for her, to knowe if she would alowe the aduenturous knight for her Champion. Whereuppon beeing conducted to her fathers presence, she prostrated her selfe before him, but hee sternely looking on her, said: Consider Princeſſe on the answere you must make to the king of Cyprus. Shee answered shee knewe not his demaunde: then had she it reiterated. Whereunto she replied:

I

I knowe not what I should answere to such a false and vniust request, and most vntrue suggestion: But since you also ioyne with me the knight of the golden Image, let him answere both for himselfe and me, to whom I commit my life, honor, right, and iustice. We sent not for you to this end (said the Sophy) for the knight of the golden image must not combat himselfe, but see if you will haue the venturous knight defend your cause or no. I care not if he doe (replyed she) and yet I thinke hee would willingly accept it, hauing all right and iustice on his behalf, defending the innocencie of a distressed Princesse: And I beseech the immortall Gods, I may liue to acknowledge and gratifie this his great courtesie.

To this replyed Don Bryanell, your selfe (diuine Ladie) hauing so great iustice to defence your innocencie, maketh mee the debter for this high fauour, whose grace hath decreede to lay the confidence of so great a charge, on so meane and vndeseruing a knight, whose seruice for this honor, is in perpetuall bond to your gracious Highnesse. Vpon the end of which speeches, the gages were on eyther side accepted, and the day of battell assigned to bee twelue dayes after.

The Soldan commaunded both the Duke and Princesse to bee surely guarded in seuerall strong Towers: and turning to the king of Cyprus, instantly requested him to lodge in his pallace vntill the battell were paste. The King easily condiscended thereto, hauing already purposed, that if he remayned victor of the fight, to require the Soldan to pardon his daughter, and giue her him, with the kingdome of Antioche, as his right, being next Heire to Don Gallaneo: for which cause hee remained there, where the Soldan greatly honored him.

The Prince Arfileo, Don Bryanell, with the Kinges, Dukes, and Earles, returned to the Dukes Pallace, to tell Don Bellianis the order taken: and entring where hee was, they founde him nowe somewhat better then they before had left him, to whome they then declared all that had passed betweene them and the Soldon, and how the day of

battell was assigned, and that the Duke had in Champion for himselfe, and how they had accepted the combatte no his and the Princesse Persianis name, expressing also the great fiercenes of the Gyants, particularly describing ỳ deformed mishapen features of the King of Cyprus, protesting they had neuer seene the like. Don Bellianis conceiued an extreame rage, hearing that discourse, & how the Soldane would not permit him to the combate at such time wherein hee was reputed a traytor, wherewith beeing almoste beside himselfe, with vnrestrained fury saide. What, thinkes the Soldane this shall be suffered that hee hath ordayned, and that with so greate maliciousnes against the law of armes: his desire shall bee fulfilled: &c. the powers diuine will not permit it. And therewithall hee rose and sat vppon his bedde, and in all haste called for his cloathes. The Damsels seeing him thus determined, intreated him not to doe it, which hee would not, but in all haste made himselfe ready, resisting al their requestes & also the Princesse Au o as, and commanding, that none should accompany him, saue the Princes there present, that led him by the armes least hee should fall. But a little after, the Princesse Florisbellas Damzells followed him, in which manner they went through the Cittie, vntill they came vnto the Soldanes Pallace, who beeing seene and knowne by the common people, said one to another, viewing him so fainte and weake. Beholde heere the knight which ouercame the knights of the vnhappy bridge, and that tooke the Dukes parte in the last turney. Many followed him, to knowe the cause of his so going in such ill disposition: who being at the Pallace gate, sent the Soldane word hee was come to speake with him. Whē it was so told the Sophy, he was at table accompanyed with the King of Cyprus & his brothers, who vnderstanding hee was there, commaunded hee should bee admitted to his presence. Is this the Knight of the golden Image (demaunded the King) whom I come both to accuse and challenge, for the treachery he committed by the deathes of my deare Cosins: This is he (replyed the Soldan)

and

and doe assure you, that his peere the sunne shines not on, to equall him in strength and valour. What may bee (saide the King) mong such as himselfe: and it were a blotte to my honour to make any account of 100. such as hee. You wrong your selfe to thinke so (answered the Soldan) for if hee should enter in the fight, I would not for the world assure you of the victorie: and therefore I ordered what I did. Now you haue told me so (said the Gyant) it behoues me in any wise to craue the combatte against him, for if I should not doe it, I am for euer dishonoured. I wil haue no more wordes hereon (sayde the Sophy) for in doing otherwise, I should not bee reuenged on him and the Duke as I desire. The king disdainfully laughed at his wordes, and said. If the others that in this battell challenter, were as you make him, yet should my wil be accomplished: But since you wil haue it otherwise, I yelde vnto you. Whereon (sayde the Soldane) giue mee your hand and word, not to accept at this time any battell against him. I promised you so to doe (said ỳ Gyant) though it bee to my lasting blame.

CHAP. XXII.

What speeches passed betweene the Knight of the golden Image and the Soldan: and how hee was stayed in the Pallace till the end of the battell.

DON Bellianis beeing before the Sophies presence, shewing no kinde of dutie, thinking that one of his state, and pretending such a challenge, should rather seeme sterne and fierce, thē humble and milde, though his weakenes through the greeuousnes of his wounds, was so great, that no Knight vnder the cope of heauen, was able with such patience to endure half the paine ỳ he perforce sustained:

which notwithstanding, with a cleare voice, that he might bee heard of all the assembly, dissembling his sorrowe as much as he could, said.

I am (most mightie Lord) forced to come to your presence in this manner that you see, by hearing certaine things that here haue bin debated in prejudice of my honor and reputation: which most exceedingly haue augmented the pain and griefe of my great sickenesse: for which cause I feare I shall not be able to vtter the imaginations of my pensiue hart, with so great decoram and reuerence, as appertaineth to so high a personage. And I protest I had not hither come, but presuming on ý equalnesse of thy iustice. The Soldan seeing him in such distresse, cõmanded him ere he further proceeded, to sit downe (a chaire being brought him) he humbling himselfe for the courtesie, sat him downe, being in such case, that he had like a thousand times to haue sounded as he stood, through ý great debilitie of his bodie. But drawing strength from his neuer fainting courage (seeing Filistone that fierce gazed on him, resting astonished at his great monstruositie) turned to the Souldane with these words. If according to the iustice of my cause (most mightie lord) committed to the administration of those men to that ende, placed by the immortall gods, on this terrestriall ball, promising such large guerdons, in their future life of euerlasting happinesse, if with equitie and right, they execute the function of so high commanding powers: whereunto the spacious territories of your vaste Empery bindes you, you looke into this whole matter, searching ý true ground therof, not suffering the vnbridled passion, of base parcialitie, to blinde the eyes of your admiring iudgement, which most often is wont to obscure, and vtterly with ignominy, besmeares the magnanimitie of the Noblest mindes.

Then I cannot but greatlye meruaile for what reasons you haue so farre proceeded in my affaires: seeing my selfe indeuoured with the vtmost of my strength, to shewe my prostrate seruice to your highnesse: whose gentle regarde might

haue

haue bene the cause that the least reason proceeding from your royall selfe, should haue contentedly satisfied mee at your command.

And I vow by the high immortal gods, no reproach should haue scandalized your mightinesse, nor any iniurious infamy stained the honour of your estate, if my selfe had beene first heard, and my consent graunted to the assigned Combatte. For in my iudgement, it is against all naturall reason, that I being willing to defend the truth (whereof my owne heart onelye can beare witnesse) another altogither ignorant thereof, shoulde in my cause indaunger his sweete life. Touching which: I cannot see, nor yet conceiue, on what foundation you shoulde builde your rash decree, to suffer the accusation of the Duke, and the Princesse your Daughter, who in no respect could bee partakers, nor counsellours in what is past. For if I slewe Don Galfeo, I did it because hee treacherously woulde haue done the like by mee, that was then altogither suspicionlesse, of any such treason, which fact, made mee after verifie my suspicion, seeing in what perill of theyr liues, Don Galfeo indaungered my companions in the Turney, that forced mee to shedde his blood as hee woulde haue done theyrs. Of which action, I should then rather haue hoped for a more larger guerdon for this good deede, then nowe to procure newe Combattes. For it were high dishonour to your high name, that such as bee inuried to treasons, treacheries, and villanies, shoulde be accounted the sonne of so greate a Monarch. Hauing not only vsed such as loue practises against strangers, as the Emperour Don Bellaneo, but also against his owne frends.

Wherefore you maye most certainlye beleeue, my selfe being nowe informed of the truth, I haue vnderstode that hee left all his Knights in the same fight: whereby they were all slaine, whilest hee most cowardlye fledde with his Cosin Don Galfeo. And moreouer, hee was a Traytour against your selfe and dignitie, in thus perswading you

that

that the Emperour was dead, or by him mortally wounded, that hee coulde by no meanes escape death: whom at this present, both liueth, and is in perfect health: whereof fearing to be accused by me and my companions, that were hereof assured by a certaine aduenture, he procured our deathes: mine in the Dukes Pallace by Don Galseo: while he so did of my companions in the Turnyes: where if he receiued his condigne deserts, through so pittiesse death, his be the losse: wherefore since there is none can better bear testimonie of this troath then my selfe, not onely against the Knights heere present, accusing me, but also against all those which shall challenge me hereof. I will tenne daies hence answere it them in fielde, and approue it on their steele plumed burgonettes: neyther will I hereupon (whatsoeuer may befall me) denie them the Combat: wherein I will make them knowe the great trecheries which they would haue vsed against me. And when you shuld refuse to doo me this iustice, assure your selfe, I am a man able more strictly to require it at your hands: For the eternall powers of the heauenly and earthly orbes, haue not infused so litle courage in my vncoloured heart, that any feare but theirs should daunt my minde: where he ended his speech, not able to proceede any further.

The Souldane all this while stoode gazing on him with great admiratiõ, in his doubtful brest, reuoluing many things, saying to himselfe, that his like for courage, he neuer heard of, and greatly wondred who he shuld be that in such open terms durst presume to defie him to his face, and in his owne land. But as a man not able to restraine the reignes of his passion, wanting the cheefest thing well and iustly to iudge of matters, shaped him this vnbeseeming answere, holding the King of Cyrus by the hande, that willingly woulde haue first replyed.

Thinke not Knight of the golden Image, that in what is done, you haue receiued any dishonour: For it is not lawfull you should enter Combat in your proper cause. For were it

good

good or bad, you would (howsoeuer it might happen) procure the good successe of your pretencion: for I am perswaded you fight by inchantment, seeing the knights of the vnhappy bridge were not able to indaunger you. And therefore is it reason none be admitted in battell against you: and concerning the rest of your threats, you shal do what you may, if the time wil permit you. For in vaine the Gods haue made me Arch-ruler ouer so many territories, if I should not accomplish the vtmost of my will. In which season I will haue you remaine in my Pallace vntill the good or bad successe of the Combat be by triall knowne, that according thereunto my pleasure may be fulfilled to the full.

But the King of Cyprus being very big swolen with such extreame pride, that he was readie to burst, said to Don Bellianis with so hideous voice, as he would swallowe him downe aliue. Great is thy desperate madnesse, Knight of the Golden Image, that I know not where thou shouldest be borne: For with my onely sight I was wont to terrifie others, both mightier, and in courage hardier then thou. And now thinkest thou to escape vnpunished? I assure thee, that if the end of the battel consisted in nought else, but with the first encounter of my Launce, to bring thee to such extremitie, that thou neuer shouldest be more able to enter any other fight: whereby also wee should after eschew the Souldanes iudgement in this case, thou shouldest thereunto be admitted. But because thou being conuicted with the treasons thou hast committed, hee determineth otherwise to chastice thy insolencie, and so hath suspended thee from the battell.

I haue no great neede to attempt it (replied Don Bellianis) for I am sure thou shalt haue to do with such Knights, that when the Combatte is ended, it shall bee publickly seene that I am not of condition like thy treacherous Cozins.

But I desired with my owne person, to rid thee of the great

doubt thy art in. And after to require account of the outrage, thou offeredst to two damzels of my companie, vppon whom thou didst shewe part of thy Consanguinitie with the Traytor Don Galaneo.

All this Don Bellianis vttered, the more to inrage the inraged Gyant, to make him accept the combatte with him, though hee needed not to spurre a forwarde horse: For hee was impatient to see himselfe vpbrayded with such opprobrious tauntes, in presence of that royall assembly: but hee had, as is afore mentioned, promised the Soldan to the contrarie, who fearing they should attempt more then wordes, said to Don Bellianis.

Hereon (knight) talke no more, for what is decreed shalbe executed. Bee it as you haue said (answeres hee) but by the way, remember the greate iniustice you offer mee. The furious Soldan would not answere him, but by his commaundement hee was committed to a strange Tower, and most surely guarded, leauing with him the Damzels of the Princesse Florisbella to cure his woundes.

Arsileo & Don Bryanell, fearing by their speeches to adde fewell to the kindled fyer, said nothing, but desiring the day of combatte were come, returned to their lodgings, sending straight wayes for the knights they before had sent to the wood, whose helpe did afterwardes greatly auayle them. The Soldan remained in his pallace very glad, thinking to execute both the Duke, and the knight of the golden Image, and likewise quieted the king of Cyprus, that much importuned him to suffer Don Bellianis to enter in the combatte, alleaging hee might better to his content bee reuenged that way for all his treacheries.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

How Don Bellianis disguised, issued out of the Tower. What happened him with Don Contumeliano of Phœnicia, and how hee returned vnknowne into the Cittie.

ALl necessarie preparations being ordered against the day of the famous battell, tenne dayes were paste of the appointed time, and yet the Duke had not, nor could finde any, that would in his behalfe vndertake that combatte, which extreamely greeued him, yet the magnanimitie of his corragious heart, permitted no outward shewe thereof. No lesse was the sorrowe of the beauteous Persiana sustained, continually beseeching her Gods, not to suffer her honors wracke, nor the downefall of her maidens fame, through want of a Champion to maintaine the iustice of her cause

On the otherside, the greate anguish of minde, that Don Bellianis conceiued, cannot be expressed, which was so grieuous, that his Damsels could by no meanes diminish, nor himselfe could finde no comforte for his troubled fantasies: but at length hee so recouered his weake strength, that hee was able to walke about his chamber, feeling himselfe in disposition to buckle on his armour: And certainly had hee but it and his sword, hee had broke forth among the strongest watch that guarded him, which in the day time were aboue 30. men, and in the night that number was doubled. In the meane time, he vsed to send one of the Damsels to knowe if the duke had got any to fight in his quarrell, & whē he heard of none, in whom he durst trust so weighty a charge, (though he had many good & valiant knights) by reason of the fiercenesse of the king of Cyprus, and his brothers, his grieuous passions were redoubled. One of his damsels y accompanied him, by name Floriana, daughter to the duke of Tunsia being Lord of many countries, vnder the Soldan of Babylon, which was the chiefest, and best beloued of the Princesse Florisella.

The other was daughter to the Earle of Cellanea, named Persiana. But the first said to Don Bellianis, the sorowe of my grieued hart is such (renowmed sir) to se the course of these things, that I cannot in words shew it, as also seeing you cannot vse your valour to remedie them, wherein your life & honor doth depend. Wherfore reuoluing many things in my troubled thoughts, haue in ẏ end, affying on the rare courage of your admirable strēgth, thogh now made weak by trecherous desines, and sinister occasions, deuised this as the last refuge, to redresse these wrongs: and this it is. You know that we oftentimes go forth vnsuspected, or mistrusted of the guard: Now may you disguised and attired in the apparell of one of vs, hauing no haire on your face, get abroad, where you may easily procure horse and Armor, & do what you esse think best, returning vnknown vnto the pallace, & there vndertake the Combat, and in meane time I will remaine in bed, faining to be you, suffering none to speak with me, saying I am extreame sick. Don Bellianis was so ioyfull with this vnlooked and vnthought remedie, as hardly it may be expressed, hoping therby not onely to assure his owne life, but also his companions, in that manifest danger, though he nothing doubted their valour, & imbracing the damsel sayd. Pray vnto the gods my good frend Floriana) that these troubles may haue their desired end, and then I promise you this great care shall be fully gratefied to your content. There is no reason replied she) why you should binde your selfe to any such gratificatiō, without desert, seeing my dutie bindeth me to your perpetual seruice, and so thinke not much of this I coūseld you. And I intreat you to gouerne your selfe well abroad, for being yet weak, you might fall in some other greater danger. Whereupon seeing the night approched, he put on Florianas apparel, wherwith he became so faire, that the damzels not a little wondred to se him so beautifull, that Persiana cryed out. Is it possible oh gods: such beautie should be on earth, you had bin better reserued it to glorifie your imperial thrones, vnlesse here you will inhabit to manifest your great powers among vs.

And

And truely (Sir knight) such beauty was neuer seene but in the Princesse Florisbella our Lady Mistresse: And well is it for all knights, you are not of our sect, else so many would by you perish, as by the Princesse our Mistresse, whose onely sight killeth (though not outright, yet with liuing death) like the murthering eyes of a slaying basiliske. Is her beautie so admirable, to cause such alterations in men? (demanded hee) you cannot beleeue, nor wil set downe (saide Floriana) the greatnesse therof. And because you may know I beare with me so greate a beauty as yours, I will shewe it you, which I continually carry with mee.

And so shee drewe it out of her pocket, and gaue it him, which hee straight knewe to bee the same that was portrayed on his shield, though his was more liuely, and for all hee viewed it continually, did neuer aske whose it was, imagining no such perfection could bee on the earth, and that Bellona had onely set it there for a shewe: Then suddenly was hee wounded to the heart, with the vnresisted darte of all conquering Loue, and not able to withstand it, was inflamed with the fyre that lasted all the dayes of his life, surpryzed with so great desire to see the substance of that shaddowe, that straight hee would departe thither, leauing al thinges hee then had in hand vnfinished.

In this newe accident was hee a good whyle, not knowing how to resolue himselfe, saue in firing his longing eyes on that dainty picture, hauing no more colour then in a dead man, which the Damzels seeing, and thinking his rysing had caused that alteration, held him by the armes least hee should fall, hee recouering and feeling himselfe touched, through shamefacednes dyed his face with such a vermilion blush, ꝑ hee redoubled his fairenesse, to whom they sayd. What extraordinary passion did you feele? which made vs feare some newe perill had befallen you in that strange chance? Whereto hee replyed. A suddaine griefe surpryzed me on my left side, so strongly, that it almost benumbd my vaines, and reaft mee of my vitall senses.

If any wound be the cause therof (said they) vncloath your self, and we will see it.

It shall not neede (answered Don Bellianis) for I shall stay too long. But I pray you giue me this picture, that so much resembles another I haue. It is at your command (replyed the Ladies) but take heede you lose it not: for if you doo, it shall cost you yours.

Then he taking his leaue of them, leauing Floriana a bed in his stead, went out of the Chamber, to descend the Tower, and by the way he met the Kings of Armenia and Tessifanty, that came to visit the Knight of the golden Image: whom he knowing, said in presence of most of the guard: Your Maiesties may not enter: for the Knight of the golden Image is a sleepe, and so sicke, that I feare he will hardly escape the danger of these wounds: and I come to tell these knights, that for a fewe daies, they should suffer none to visit him, for it would be very troublesome to him, and now I will go to know what the Duke determineth about his cause.

The Kings hearing this, would goe no further, but charging the guarde to let none enter his Chamber, returned back, leading Don Bellianis with them, whom they knewe not through the obscuritie of the night, and had it not beene, his pensiue & sullen melancholie, they could not but haue knowne him by the tallnesse of his body, although he stoped as much as he could, and being all without the pallace, the Kings would accompanie him to the Dukes Tower, but he thanking them for that courtesie, would not suffer them, and so parted going alone, and being nigh the Dukes Pallace, hee espied his companions talking with many knights, and because hee would not be knowne, he toke an other by way, which led him without the Cittie gate, through which hee went, till hee came to a fayre groue of trees, somewhat out of the high waye, where vnder a spreading beech, hee lay till the Mone began with her light to shewe her selfe, there washe surprised with the remembrance of the beautie of the most honourable Princesse

Florabella,

Florisbella, which he so contemplated that hee was carryed away with the deepe imaginations of her diuine perfections, that hee knewe not whether hee was in Heauen or in earth, and drawing forth the picture that the Damzells hadde giuen him, with heart-breaking sighes, he vttered these words, proceeding from the bottome of his loue-sicke soule. Oh diuine, and most Angelicall beautie of the absolutest Princesse liuing on this mossy orbe, vnhappie was the houre wherein I heard thee named, and more vnfortunate, when my eyes were captiuated in the admyred sight of thy pictured beautie, for seeing the sole shaddawe of thy nominated rarenesse hath the power to drowne mee in heauie soule-tormented passions, what then will the substance of thy immortall deitie do, when the fruition of that sight shall robbe mee of my ioying senses. Then must I onely call and continually crie for death, as cheefest anchorage and remedie of my wound, and with my life to end these my extreame, and intollerable sorrowes. But fole that I am, where may I obtaine more glorie then to nourish such conceits, or what happie fortune then possessing this sight burthening torment, if I do not altogither dispaire of ỹ curing salue, for my mortall wound. Oh (wise Bellona) not without cause didst thou bid me come to the Soldanes Court, and remember me; I should not there, in my greatest affections, lose the reignes of my high courage. But who is he, that is able to do so, hauing no strength to counterpoyze my greefes, nor cure for my oppressed heart, being so far removed from the causer of my torments, whose supreme thoughts cannot deigne to bend their fauors on so meane a knight: if they did, how should I merit, or deserue them by conioyning both desires in one, when the large continents of the spacious world, doth not containe two greater enemies then hers, and my father, or where is there a greater difference of lawes, and religion, then betwixt them, whereby I maye not onely dispayre of remedie, but liue perpetually the disgracest Knight that in this age suruiueth. Oh Floriana, when, or wherein, did I so much iniurie thee,

that

that then shoulde on mee so cruelly be reuenged: and herewith firing his eies on his imaginary sorrowes, and vnable to resist the violence of the suddain passion, fell in a trance. Wherin he continued, till a knight arriued there, which trauailed that way by the light of the then shyning Moone, who seeing that Lady lye with the picture in manner rehearsed, alighted, and tyed his horse to a tree, and going to her, toke her in his armes, vsing those remedies that he knewe to recouer her, if she were not dead, which he feared, seeing her stur neither hand nor foote.

Don Bellianis with what was done vnto him returned to himselfe, greatly amazed to see that knight there, thinking he had heard his complaint. But the knight rested no lesse astonished, to see his excellent beautie, that he could not vtter one word, yet with a trembling voice caused by the suddaine fyer of loue that burnt his heart said. What great misfortune hath befallen you (most fayre Ladye) that in this solitarie place should put you in such extreame: And I sweare by the order of knighthood, I receiued that with the vttermost of my power, euen with my death, to procure your present remedie. Therefore I beseech you courteous damsel to tell it me, for I shall account my selfe more happie to be imployed in your seruice, then to bee created Emperour of Constantinople, seeing your rare beautie bindes all the world to your seruice, no more being therein to desire, then to liue and dye at your command.

The Prince Don Bellianis heard his speech to the end, and smiled in himselfe to see the knights deceit, although those words added a greater flame to his burning fier, with remembrance of his mistresse. And he determined to answere him according to his opinion, (that his owne purpose might not bee discouered) though he should thereby more torment the knight, greatly delighting with such discourses, hoping himselfe to vse them, if at any time he saw the Princesse Florisbella, and therefore replyed thus.

Truly

Truly (sir knight) although my misfortune were not for no other cause then now to ioy your presence, I should haue taken it for my greatest consolation. And I think my self most happie, that the Gods haue permitted me to arriue in this place, to inioy the promise which you of your meere bountie and courtesie haue so liberallie made. For my chaunce is the strangest that euer you heard: and therefore it behoues me, that you graunt me a boone, nothing disaduantaging your selfe thereby. The Knight ioying more thereat then at any thing in all his life, answered. Command me what you will (faire Ladie) for you neede not demaund any thing by intreatie. Then before wee proceede any thing further (said Don Bellianis) vnclaspe your helme, and after you shall know what I require. The knight straight did it, and sitting down (hauing thitherto stood) discoursed togiter of diuerse things, chiefly touching amourous matters. Don Bellianis was greatly pleased with his talke, and the more to ease his owne greefe. It is needlesse to describe the features of the Knight, being of a gallant disposition, and yong, not aboue fiue and twentie yeares of age: of whom don Bellianis demaunded his name: whereto he said, he would do it, if she would accept him for hers. Don Bellianis said, I will if that will please you, and so forwarde with your discourse. Then (my deare Ladie) know my name is Don Contumeliano, of Phenicia, sonne and heyre vnto the King of that countrey: and by another name am called the solitarie Knight, because I possesse nothing that better agrees with my conditions, then to wander through solitarie and vnknowne places, shunning the habitation of populated Cities, and townes, thinking therby that the blind God of Loue should haue no power ouer me, and therefore would I not this night lie in Persepolis: but he hath at his pleasure reuenged himselfe on me, with your gracious sight, whose spedie remedie if I want, will leaue me altogither breathlesse. The hearing of your state (most noble Prince) hath highly contented mee (saide Don Bel[illegible] I discontent, suffering the like torments

that you through such a passion, for procuring to anoyde the cause of such effect, haue been this night so plagued with Loues all conquering power, that now I feele the force of his tributarie paines. In this chat they spent the better two parts of the night: which don Bellianis seeing, resolued to demaunde of the Prince, what he wanted for the combat, desiring that by no meanes his Companions should know his intent, for he durst not trust them with a battell of such import, hoping also to obtain his request, said. I do desire you (most honored prince) that you will performe the promise you made me, which is this. I left not farre hence, a Knight in an extreame daungerous aduenture, destitute of an armour, weapons, and horse, to performe a most notable combat, and were it not (sir knight) that I also promised to procure it him, I would not now presume so much to iniurie you as to request them. But beleeue me, if I liue, I will to your content gratifie this good turne. For at this time can I not do otherwise, being requested by that knight to get him them. And seeing it hath been my happe to meete with you, I do beseech you, to make me so happie by your gracious graunt, promising if I reuiue to morrow at this time, to returne them, and this is my boone, and your promise. The knight was verie ioyfull to haue occasion to pleasure his mistresse, especially expecting so great a benefite as she promised, cared not whether he neuer should haue them, although they were the richest in the world (sauing don Bellianis.) They were of colour yellow, rarely ingrauen with curious workes, and set with rich Orient Pearles, whose inestimable worth cannot be vallued. In his sheeld was pictured a mightie mountaine, with a knight lying vnder an Oke, with his hand vnder his cheeke, leaning vpon the sheeld, staring and gazing on the cruell god of Loue, sitting on the top with his bow & arrowes, drawne so naturally, that euery looker on might easily beleeue it to be aliue. And he said to don Bellianis. Faire mistresse, seeing all my heart is yours, what need you more saue command all I elle possesse as your owne: for my [illegible] rest

Er[illegible] at

at your despoſing: more desiring to vndertake that combat vnder your seruice, then with my armor to pleasure you. But seeing you will haue it so, stay while I call my page, that is not farre hence, knowing I would not go into the Citie this night: whereupon he sounded a horne, whose valuc was more then might be thought. The force of which blast, was heard through all the citie, wherewith he made a certaine signe, at which the page straight came, who seeing his maister accompanied with that lady, greatly maruelled, knowing it to be against his condition: and alighting off his palfray, said. What wonder is this (sir) to see you in such a place with so faire a Goddesse in your companie? I feare she hath of purpose descended the heauens, to penetrate the flintie wars of your adamant heart, seeing on earth there is none that could do it. It greatly pleased the knight to heare his page praise his mistresse so highly, and commanded him, saying: Giue me my other apparell (Bruneo) for this Goddesse thou speakest off staieth for me. Whereupon the page drew forth of a male, the richest suite of apparell that euer Don Bellianis sawe. It was all of a Rubie colour, imbrodered with many of those stones, and other of vnualued price: and vnbuckling his armour, gaue them him, and put on those garments. Don Bellianis admired, and highly commended the knights gallant liberalitie, and the more, that deceitfull loue should make him so kind, & desirous to requite his bountie said. Most noble and renowmed Prince, I do accept the gift of your lent armor, & for the same do promise ere 20. dayes do passe, to remedie your greefe to your great profit, & so require no more of me. For this promise the prince kneeled to kisse his hands. Don Bellianis wold not suffer it, taking him vp in his arms, & embraced him kindly, which exceedingly gladded his hart. And therwith did help him to mount on his horse, saying. You may (sweet mistresse) sit without feare: for though my horse seemeth as hee doth, yet is he so gentle and tractable, as may be desired. I beleeue no lesse (my good lord, replied don Bellianis) and taking his armor bound in a cloath) before him, & don Contumelianos sword in his hand (who toke his pages) saide: I intreate you

to enter the Citie to day, where you shall see your armour vsed, and after follow the Knight, for you shall find me in this place: and so taking leaue, departed through the thicke Groaue, leauing him as a man that firmely gazeth on some wonder: and rapt with admiring contemplation thereof, suddainlie loseth the sight of his delightfull obiect. So rested Don Contumeliano, who not knowing what to doo, lay him downe to sleepe, till it shoulde bee time to enter the Cittie, which hee did, mounted on his Pages Horse, in which Cittie hee neuer had beene, where taking his Inne, expected the houre to go to Court: where we leaue him, to returne to Don Bellianis, trauailing through the wood, as afore said.

CHAP. XXIIII.

What happened to Don Bellianis in the Court, armed in Don Contumelias armour. How he accepted the battell. His talke with the Princesse Persiana before the fight, and what befell him in the same.

DOn Bellianis going through the wood, (as is said) came at last to a Caue, where in Winter the Shepheardes vsed to withdraw themselues, which hee seeing to fitte his turne, alighted more easier then Don Contumeliano, did mount him a horsebacke, and so went in, and straight put off Florianaes garments, and armed him as well as hee might, hauing no helpe, which done, hee hid his female Robes, couering them with some bowes, which he cut with his sword, that none that there should arriue might thinke them otherwise: and so toke his way towards Persepolis, at such time as the giuer of all light began with his resplendent rayes to cleare the duskie skie, and chase the darkened cloudes from the ayrie Region, when the chirping

ping birdes with their melodious harmonie saluted the mor-nings vprise, whose varying notes, and pleasing musick, strok such thoughts into the passionate Prince, of his contemplatiue mistresse, that he regarded not his way, nor knew not where he was, till he found himselfe at the citie gate: which entring, he came to the lodging that Don Contumeliano had taken, who being at the dore, presently knew each other, yet spake neuer a worde: whereupon he toke another horse, and followed Don Bellianis to the Pallace, to know the ende of that aduenture: and by the way, were greatly admyred of all men, the one for the richnesse of his armour, and the other for the sumptuousnesse of his apparell (as afore is mentioned.) Don Bellianis lighted at the Court gate, and hauing none to hold his horse, Don Contumeliano said, giue your horse to my Page, who shall loke vnto him: For though you know me not, yet am I bound to do you any seruice. Don Bellianis requiting his courtesie, did as he requested, and sayde. Such fauours (sir Knight) cannot but presage a happie successe to my enterprise. And taking him by the hand, passed into a long Gallery, where they sent the Soldans word of their comming, craning accesse to his presence: which graunted, they entred, and found him talking with the King of Cyprus, who then with his brothers began to arme themselues for the fight, highly reioycing, imagining their enterprize ended, assuring themselues that fiue hundred good knights were not able to withstande them in field. And when they sawe those knights enter in so royall armour and apparell, with such gallant disposition, they much praysed them. They being before the Soldan, kneeled on the ground, demaunding his princely hands to kisse them, who courteously toke them vp, and imbraced them, and saide they might vtter what they would, and what they came for: whereto don Bellianis replied. Commaund (dread Lord) the duke Alfiron to be sent for, and then you shall know what we require. The Soldan sent for him straight, who came garded with a thousand armed men. And not knowing the cause of his sending for, was

verie sorrowfull, seeing that day to bee the last of his prefixed time, for the tryall of his cause, and that he had got no Champion to defend his right by fight. Don Bellianis seeing him, with an audible voice that al might heare him, said. Most mightie Sophy of Syconia, and imperious Soldane of this great Persian Monarchie, know, I am called the Solitarie knight, if my name haue euer penetrated your eares, sonne vnto the king of Phenicia, who wandring about the worlde in search of strange aduentures, haue by chance arriued in this your kingdome, where I heard the occasion that the king of Cyprus, otherwise named the Giant Filistone the fierce, hath made agaynst duke Alfiron the courteous, and other knights of his company, as also against thy daughter the beautious Perfiana, touching the death of the prince of Antioch, who he saith they trecherously slue. I do well know the duke Alfiron, (although his memorie doth not comprehend any remembrance of his fauors towards me) I am assured he wold do nothing against the lawes and duties of a good knight. But to be briefe, I am resolued to vndertake, & fight the cõbat for him, if he hath none to do it, & I intreat him to grant it me. For though I deserue not he should trust me with so great a charge, yet my indeuor, and his iustice herein, shall supply my want. The whole assembly much admired him, iudging he was of no little valor, that durst cõbat with so terrible and deformed Giants, though they mightilie doubted his victorie. The Soldan was sore greeued, thinking euerie small let to be great, according to his desire to see ỹ matter ended, as he wold, & willingly wold he giue that citie to be fully reuenged of the duke. Yet dissembling his inward thoughts, said. You may trie (sir knight) whether the duke will grant you the fight, & then do what you therin best may. Notwithstanding I know not why you shuld procure this cõbat, getting nothing but the losing of your life. Al shalbe as pleaseth the gods (replied don Bellianis.) The duke hearing these speeches, said: I cannot hitherto call to mind (most excellent prince) wherein my deserts should so bind you to succor me in this my greatest need. But I

do

do assuredly beléeue the immortall gods hath sent you, because they will not suffer so great villanie proceede further. And with this, as an auspicious tokē (assuring me of your victory through your incomparable courtesie, and more valor) I grant you the fight, and perswade your selfe, that all right and iustice you this day defend. I am so perswaded (answered don Bellianis) and therefore say no more. But who is your accuser? The king of Cyprus stepped forth, saying: I am he. Wherfore, sée if still thou be so resolued. More assuredly will I now maintaine it, then at first (said don Bellianis) for thy presence sheweth there can bee no reason nor iustice in any thing thou attemptest. The Giant inraged with these words, & séeming through choller to spit fire, intreated the Soldan to command the prisoner to be brought into the field: for being all armed they had nothing to stay for. Hereat don Bellianis was somwhat moued, thinking it would be knowē he was not in ỳ tower. Many of those knights went for the prisoners, & entring don Bellianis lodging, they found Floriana a bed in his place: but her felow was vp, & had closed the curtains so close, that none could sée who was a bed. Who when she saw the gard come in, said very softly to them. Go no further (good knights) for the knight of the golded Image lyeth in the extream paine of his life. The Sophy (said they) hath sent vs for him, to cary him to the field. Sée (said she) where he lieth, but I beséech you stir him not, & I will go with you to the Soldan, and sée what he will command. Wherupon they went to the Sophy with her, who declared vnto him in what case don Bellianis was. The Soldan cōmanded he should not be molested, and that she should sée him want nothing. He now needeth nothing but this (said she) and séeing the knight ỳ had vndertaken the cōbat, she knew him to be don Bellianis, by his gallant demeanor, and the talnesse of his body, and wondred to sée him furnished with so rich armor: and returning to the tower, told it Floriana, who with her greatly reioyced, assuring themselues, that don Bellianis would obtaine the victorie: reasoning together, that he séemed to be yoked in the amorous bonds of their Ladie, by that which befell him when they named her.

After

At this time was the Princesse and the Duke conducted to the field, seeming verie pleasant. The Princes don Brianel, and Arsileo, were aduertised how the duke had gotten a champion. They were glad therof, because the imprisoned knights might rest more contented and secure of their good successe, and so they mounted on their horses. The King of Arminia did beare Don Brianels sheeld, and Arsileos was borne by the king of Tessifantie. The Duke Gariano did beare one helme, and the Prince of Brandalia the other: and in this maner they were accompanied to the field, with the sound of many militarie instruments, where at that time they met the knight of the golden Image, whose launce and sheeld was borne by Don Contumeliano, whose gallant disposition euerie one admired, thinking he should be whom in effect he was: and al they ioining together, most louingly saluted each other, and entred the lists, where they alighted, within a Pauilion (prepared for them) till the Soldans comming, where Don Bellianis had the buckles of his armor closer guirt. There then also entred aboue tenne thousand armed men, and in the middest of them they brought the Princesse Persiana, and the Duke. The Princesse was mounted vpon a scaffold richly appointed for her, but the Duke remained among the gard, who spred themselues round about the yard, for the better assurance both of the prisoners, and combattants. When suddenly the earth seemed to tremble and quake with the noyse and sound of drums and trumpets, that the knights could not heare one another. The knights came forth of their Pauilion (which was heard by the Princesse) and mounted a horseback, to expect the comming of the Giants, who then appeared in sight. But Don Bellianis seeing so many eyes fixed on him, desirous to do no lesse then he was wont, set one hand on the pummell of his Saddle, and lept therein, not setting foote in the stirrop, and with the force hee put therete, the blod issued out of his armour, from the wounds that were not yet whole, which seene of many, they counselled him to leaue the the combat, being so sore wounded. The Princesse

Persiana

Perſiana ſent him word that hee ſhould come to her, for ſhee ſhould ſpeake with him, which he did, where ſhe intreated him to mount aloft. The guard ſeing him goe alone, did not let him: Which was at ſuch time that the Princeſſe Aurora arryued, well accompanied, who was conducted to that ſcaffold. Theſe two Ladies intertained each other with ſuch courteſie, as belonged to their high ſtates. And the Princeſſe Aurora ſeeing that knight there, demaunded why hee was called. To whome the Princeſſe Perſiana replyed: ſhee ſhould ſtraight know why, and ſo ſoftly, that none but they three might heare, ſaid to him. By the life of that thing which you muſt loue in this world moſt noble knight) ſo the immortall Gods may bleſſe you, with the euerliuing glorie of a famous victorie at this preſent, and moſt happy ſucceſſe to all enterpryſes and aduentures you ſhall vndertake, I doe intreate you to declare your name, for either I am new blinde, or I doe certainely knowe you, hauing dreamed this night, that I was deliuered by the handes of a knight I greatly affected, and ſo would I knowe it (though I thinke it impoſſible you ſhould bee hee) which you may aſſuredly doe, knowing how it behoues mee to keepe it ſecrete.

And heere the Hiſtorie ſaith, that ſhee in deede did dreame that night, ſhee was deliuered by Don Belliani: who made this anſwere. I cannot conceiue (faire Princeſſe wherefore you ſhould deſire my name, hauing nothing leſſe therein, but to increaſe your ſorrow: yet knowe, I am your knight of the golden Image, and ſo pardon me, for you ſhall knowe the reſt hereafter. Wherewith hee deſcended, leaſte he were ſuſpected, though euery one thought the Princeſſe did but incourage him, with the inſtice of her cauſe, who was aduertiſed by don Belliani, ſhee ſhould not diſcloſe that ſecrete by no meanes, neither to his fellowes, nor to any other liuing, and mounting a horſebacke, the Gyants entred the liſtes, with their helmes on: whereat the Ladies were much aſtoniſhed in ſeeing them,

and in knowing him to be the knight of the golde image, something feared his life, because of the blood that issued from his old wounds, yet rested assured of the victorie, marueiling howe hee should get out of prison, and be furnished with so rich armour, and turning to the knights, hee saw the Soldan marshelling the field (being himselfe iudge of the fight) and placing the knights one against the other, and comming to the knight of the golden Image, he said, seeing him bloody through his armor. How wil you enter in fight (sir knight) being thus wounded: It is no matter (said hee) for this onely am I knighted.

The Soldan urged it no more, but withdrawing himselfe, commaunded the signall of the fight to be giuen by the Trumpets, at whose sound, the knightes with armed fury, in such sorte made against each other, that they rather seemed so many sudden flashes of lightnings, renting through the Ayrie passage of the heauens, then men, and met in the middest of the field, with so mighty incounters, as if so many peces of Ordinance had beene discharged.

Artileo and Don Bryanell incountred the king of Cyprus two brothers, that all foure measured their lengthes on the earth, sore wounded. Don Bryanell hauing one foote hanging in the stirrope, that hee could by no meanes rise. Don Bellianis and the fearefull Felixton, so cruelly met, that Don Bellianis shield was pierced, together with his arme, and the furious launce not resting there, penetrated both armour and coate of male, where his arme was nayled with a pece of the speare, to his breast, making there a wyde woũd, from whence issued infinit blood.

But Don Bellianis incountred the Gyant in the middle of his steeled shield, which also was pearced, with his breast plate, and the shocke was so strong, that the launce guided by so braue an arme, and the fury of so good a horse, that therewith the king of Cyprus losse his stirropes, and meeting body with body, and breast with breast, the diuelish Gyant hauing nothing

thing to stay his farte, fell to the ground: Don Bellianis had done the like, if hee had not gotten hold by his horse necke. Who is able to expresse the amazed wonder of the beholders, at that braue incounter, hauing neuer seene the like, that they raysed a murmurre among themselues, with high praise honoring the extreame valour of that knight, who seeing thatit behoued him to lose no time, was alighting off his horse, when the king made towards him, more inraged then a fierce baited bul. But first looking to his companions, perceiued the vertureus knight to haue one leg still in his stirrope, and in great danger, because his aduersarie was going vppon him, intending to end his life, which easily without disturbance he might haue done, wherefore seeing his friendes sure perill, set aparte his wonted courtesie, and ranne with his horse against the Gyant, that hee returned to the ground, and himselfe lepping from his saddle, went to helpe Don Bryanell, which purpose was leted by the kings cõming, that thereby he was faine to stay, to repaire himselfe from the Gyants sudden blowe, who raysing his battell-axe, would haue discharged it on his head.

But the knight of the golden Image, seeing hee could not helpe himselfe with his left arme, by reason of the peece of lance that was in it, stepped aside, that the axe stroke on the earth, and therein ranne aboue a yarde: and going vppon the King, was vnawars surprysed by his brother that hee ouerthrewe, who gaue him so cruell a blowe on his Helme, that it made him to bowe to the groumde, which made the rage to kindle in the Knightes breast, that very fyer sparkled from his eyes, and like a hotte chafed Boare, or hungrye Lyon bent to his praye, wounded the Gyant that had stroke him, with so puissant a blowe on the Helme, that hee cut it in two, as if it had beene of paper, sorely wounding his head, that hee was like to fall, yet with the force of the blowe, his semitor fell out of his handes, resting so astonished, that hee knewe not whether he were aliue or dead.

But the knights sword flew in two peeces, that onely the hilles remained in his handes, to defend himselfe in such extreame danger, and of so puisant enemies as those. Who at that time had beheld the two Princesse, Persiana and Aurora, with the good Duke Alfiron, and the fowre Damzels of the beauteous Princesse Florisbella, that thence beheld the fight, had no neede to seeke elsewhere, the prodall colour of timerous death. For in their faces was it so perfect to be seene, that no Painter euer did better drawe it in varity of colours, which sight did so terrifie the dolorous Ladies, that they desired no longer life, then it might bee guarded by the knight of the golden Images safetie.

But the good Prince of Phœnicia, was there like to dye, for very sorrow and anguish of minde, seeing all that euill had happened through the weakneſſe of his defectiue sworde, and cursing of himselfe, thought his Mistresse would for euer abhorre him for that cause, which would bee the losse of the best knight that euer put on armour. Yet hitherto Don Bryanell could by no meanes get his foote loose, but with the strength that he set, drewe his horse vppon all his legge, that the very paine thereof had almost killed him, onely the Soldan reioyced at this disastrous accident, thinking hereby to effect his desire. The Cyprus king was so highly glad, that hoysting his arc aloste, cryed aloude, this blowe shall execute my will. The Prince Arsileo that in such state sawe his companions, would haue gone to helpe them, but his aduersarie perceiuing it, let fall his semitor, and flung himselfe vppon him, whereat vnable to shunne it, did the like, stryuing with their excessiue strength to ouerthrowe one another.

Don Bellianis though hee saw himselfe without sworde, and not able to helpe him with one arme, was not therefore daunted with the fearefull sight of present death, that hee before him sawe, but seeing the most fierce Gyant come towardes him, flung with all his strength the peece of sword remaining in his hande, that lighting on his helme, the force thereof

thereof threwe him backwardes to the grounde, and before his brother could remedie it (with admirable quickneſſe which the preſent danger did augment) he toke vp the ſemitor that he let fall, as is already ſaid, & leauing the fight at that ſtay, ſtepped to Don Brianell, and cutting the horſe girts, ſet him on his feete.

The fierce King that then came vpon him gaue him a blow on the head, which if it had not bin giuen him vnaduiſedly, it had clouen it in the middle, but not ſtaying there, it deſcended on the ſhield, cutting it all ouerthwart, & falling on his thigh, parting all the Armour, & opened his fleſh moſt piteouſly. Don Bellianis feeling his wound, ſtroke the King ſideling with the heauie ſemitor, ỹ if he had not warded ỹ blow with his ſhield, it had cleane cut of his leg, yet it threw the ſhield in two peeces to the ground, togither with his hand, and being cloſe one to another, the King would haue caſt his armes vppon him, but the Knight leapt aſide, vnwilling to wraſtle: whereupon they wounded themſelues moſt greeuouſly, that with their mightie ſtroakes, they ſometime bowed their heades to their breaſt, ſometime they bended their knees, and ſette their hands to the ground, and the King wanting his left arme, it made him to roze like a chaſed Bull, that hee ſcantly felt any of the knights blowes.

Don Brianell ſeeing himſelfe rid from his horſe, drew his ſworde, making againſt the king, but he was ſtayed by his brother, who met him with a heauie Mace, which he had on his ſaddle pummel, vſing it in ſtead of his loſe ſemitor, and ſo piteouſly wounded one another, that the vnterous knight was fain to helpe himſelf with his nimbleneſſe, to auoide the gyants intollerable blowes, hauing wounded him in many places. The like did the Prince Arſileo, who hauing let looſe his aduerſarie, layde cloſe to it with their ſharpe ſwordes, with ſuch admiration of the beholders, as if the vniuerſall iudgement conſiſted in the victorie of that battell, and none durſt vtter one word, but with amazed gaze ſtared in one anothers faces, to

to ſee thoſe knights eſcaped that great danger, (who a little be-fore, they accounted dead) by the meere courage and valour of the knight of the golden Image, might not compare for haughty deeds of honoured Chiualrie, and whome they ſo much eſteemed. And returning to the greeued Princeſſe, they knew not what to ſay, through conceiued gladneſſe, and had much to do to diſſemble it in time of ſorrow: no leſſe glad were the Ladies of the Princeſſe Florisbella, who for ioy embraced each other, eſpecially Floriana, that with teares in her eyes, ſaid. Oh (moſt vnhappie maiden that I am) for I neuer gaue worſe counſaile in all my life to any, then I did to this knight if hee heere had dyed. But his death ſhould not haue beene without company: For in the inſtant my eyes had ſeene ſuch a thing, I would headlong haue tumbled my ſelfe from of this Tower, that it might be knowne, with what ſinceritie and faithfulneſſe I compelled him. Peace ſaid the other, for we ſhall ſee him ſtraight victoriouſly tryumphe ouer his enemies, and therefore lette vs procure all neceſſaries, for to cure his wounds.

At this time all the knights and Gyants wers beſmeared in their owne blood, that where they ſette their feete, they left theyr ſignes printed with the ſame, and ſo tyred with wearineſſe, hauing fought almoſt fiue houres, that they coulde ſcarce hold their ſwordes in their hands The feareful Filiſon, almoſt with ſweatie furie choaked, and tyred, withdrewe himſelfe a part to breathe, which greeued not Don Bellianis: who doing ſo, drew forth the peece of ſpeare from his arme, that embrued in his blood, it ſtucke ſo faſt that it put him in extream paine: and walking vppe and downe becauſe their woundes ſhould coole, they looked on their fellowes, and ſawe the venterous knight reduoble his ſtrength, through anger of the paine, wherewith he had brought the Gyant, with whom he fought, (hauing a mortall wounde giuen him before, by the Solitarie knight) to ſuch paſſe, that hee coulde not long defend himſelfe.

Which

Which when the king of Cyprus did see, he woulde with his Courtleaxe wound the knight, that then he might incurre great daunger, being taken vnawares, but at that instant, the watchfull Prince Don Bellianis perceiuing it, being not farre from the king, disturbed that his purpose, pushing him on his breast so strongly that he recoyled backe three or foure steppes, wherby they renewed their fight more fiercely and braue, then in the whole day before.

But Don Bellianis perceiuing, that if the Combatte long continued, he was like to faint, through the infinit blood he had lost, aduentured himselfe, to receiue a blowe of the Gyant. Which when he sawe descended on him, commending himselfe from the bottome of his heart, vnto the Almightie, to deliuer him from that daunger, and thrust at the Giant so brauely vnder his arme, that being there vnarmed, and with such excessiue force performed, that the swoorde ranne into his flesh vp to the hilts, piercing his heart in the middle, wherewith he fell downe dead. But he was by the Gyant cruelly wounded on the head, that he also fell downe in a trance, which greeued euery one, chiefly the Princesse Aurora, that was forced to cry out. Oh immortall Gods why haue you suffered so great an euill: for without doubt, the best knight that euer gyrded sword is slaine. But her sorrowe was turned to a generall gladnesse, seeing him amazedly rise, and was going to aide his companions, if he had not sieue Arsileo at one blowe cut off one of the Gyants legges, and with an other his head. The like did Don Brianell, not regarding the Souldanes cryes, requiring him that hee woulde not do it, for he yelded him vanquished. Which done, they in they hearts rendred immortall thankes vnto the Almaghtie, for their victorious deliuerie, from so vnspeakeable perill, and with great loue imbraced the Knight in the yelowe Armour, whome they imagined to bee Don Contumeliano, yelding to him all the honor of the victorie.

Whereupon

Whereupon, (not expecting the Soldans commaund) the generall assembly shouted out for ioy, sounding a number numberlesse of all manner of military instruments, running about the field for gladnesse, which cut the Soldane to the heart, having no patience to endure it.

CHAP. XXV.

What the Knight of the Golden Image did after the battell ended: And how the Soldan commanded the duke to be borne to prison.

SO soone as the Princesse Persiana did see the battell ended, with such ioy as euery one may iudge, descended the scaffold, and going to the knights that yet were talking togither, shee would haue kneeled before don Bellianis, but he preuented it by dowing so himselfe, very courteously, saying. You haue no cause (most excellent Lady, to thanke me, being bound to do more then this for the Duke Alfiron. But if you will, then (royall Princesse) gratifie these knights, whose valour hath so wel defended your right, and iustice: for my seruice is of no worth, but while it bee shadowed vnder their haughtie deedes. I will not (famous knight) saide the Princesse, extoll the honour you haue won in this battel, with such deere losse of your blood, (besides the ouerthrowe of such great treacherie as was ordained against vs) being more then any hundred knights might attaine. And since you will not haue me rest your debtor, for this vncomparable fauour, speake to him for whom you vndertooke the Combat, who is no lesse bound to you then I. So leauing him with the Duke, and the princesse Aurora, she imbraced the other knight, vsing betwixt them words of great kindnesse, according to their high estate.

Don

Don Bellianis leauing the Duke, whent to the Sophy, (that was returning to the Pallace, hauing commanded his daughter and the duke to be returned to prison) and being nigh him, and followed by many knights, said vnto him. Since mightie Lord the truth cannot be more cleare and manifest, I beseeche your highnesse, cõmand that the Princesse Persiana, the knight of the golden image, and the Duke Alfinon may beset at liberte, their innocencie being saued and confirmed, by the happie successe of this battell, which intreat to be forthwith, respecting the great necessitie we haue of care for our most daungerous wounds.

The Sophy that minded no such thing, replied. I do beleeue you know (Sir knight) I am not bound to what you said: for if they be cleared of Don Gallaneos death, as you wil haue it, the Duke notwithstanding is not freed of his trespasse committed against mee, hauing resisted my wil, with hostile armes, which being so plaine, I had no cause to put it in trial of battel, but reserue vnto my self the punishmẽt of that fault, according as it deserues: therefore talke to me no more thereof, for I will doo nothing, more then I haue said. Whereto Don Bellianis answered.

We expected no such vsage at the hands of so great a lord, I vndertooke the fight for all matters concerning the Duke, and if hee be cleare of Don Gallaneos death, it followes then, that he is free of all other things whatsoeuer. Replie no more (said the Soudan) for I will haue it so: Whereuppon he commanded the Duke to be returned to prison, who straight was there conducted himself going to his Pallace, and would heare none speak: whereat Don Bellianis was like to burst, through rage. Don Brianell and Arsileo disguised him to go with thẽ to their lodging, to be cured: to whom he answered. I haue no neede of cure, since the Duke remaineth imprisoned, and so I humbly take my leaue, for I will departe out of the Cittie.

Wherewith he left them in field, taking his way to the

word, onely followed by don Contumeliano. The knights and the Princesse Aurora returned to their lodging, reasoning on nothing but on the Solitarie knight, whome they thought neuer enough prayſed, hauing by him receiued so great helpe in the battell. I should not haue beleeued said Arbleo, that the world contained such a knight as the Prince of Phenicia. You did not see his deedes so well as I (replied don Brianell) because you were busie in Combat, and beleeue me, he no more feared (being without sword) then if he had beene confronted with no foes, which if it had not broken, he needed none of our helpe.

Thus talking togither, they laide themselues in their seuerall beds, where they were cured, hauing many and dangerous wounds. The Princesse Aurora leauing them, went well accompanied to the pallace, to see what was done in the Dukes libertie, where shee founde the Princesse Persiana, that for the words spoken by the knight of the Golden Image, was sette free, who receiued each other, as their great loue testified, and after sent to see what the Souldane did, who brought them word, he commaunded the Dukes guarde to bee doubled, and that also he hadde sent the aduenterous knight word, commaunding him, that since he would not at his intreaties spare the king of Cyprus brothers life, he should forthwith depart his Land, or else his life should pay the forfit of his staye.

The Ladies greatly greeued, hearing this, demaunded his aunswere: which was, that hee was contented to obey him within three daies, but he should regarde, that hee did it against lawe and iustice, which beeing so, hee would resist him against his will, since hee would not obserue them the conditions of the Combatte, and therefore hee shoulde prepare to entertaine him, which indeede was so: for they determined to bee reuenged at full vppon the Souldane, who was guarded in his Pallace with more then tenne thousand

Armed

Armed men, to preuent all occasions of conspyracies against him.

The Kings of Armenia and Tessifonty, spake with him, and intreating him not to breake his promise, which they in his behalfe had made vnto the Duke. But he would not heare them. Whereuppon they went to the Dukes Pallace to visit the wounded knights, where among them, they layde the plot and manner, howe to free the Duke (as hereafter shall be shewen) which cost many liues, with losse of infinit blood.

CHAP. XXVI.

What befell the Knight of the Golden Image, and Don Contumeliano, who beeing at the poynt of death, was succoure with the aduenture of the Desperation of loue.

DOn Bellianis hauing left his companions in field, toke the next way to the place from whence that morning he came, going out of the Cittie gate, at such time, that the darkenesse (through absence of the cleare light, and dayt-resplending sunne) ouerspread the face of the earth, giuing place vnto the watery brightnesse of Dianaes beames, whose pale reflect increased the paine of Don Bellianis deepe starres, as also with one memorating the excellencye, and diuine beautie of his (aboue all others fayre) mistresse, the princesse Florisbella, whose remembrance made him forget Don Cõtumeliano that followed him a litle after, and beeing come to the wood, and seeing him come towards him, stayed to talke together.

The Prince don Contumeliano comming to him said. Whither doo you meane to go (Sir Knight so sore wounded, leauing the Citie where you might be cured. I haue no neede, answered the knight of any other thing but your sight (most excellent Prince) to heale me. The Prince wondred at these woords, and thought by this, and by what he saw him do in the pallace, calling himselfe by his name, that he so was counselled to do by his Lady the Damzell, to whome he lent his armour, but very courteously thanking him for his kinde speeches, thus said.

I cannot expresse the great desire I haue, to know whom you are, therby to see the end of the aduenture which happened to me, since yesterday at this time: which (by the immortall gods I protest) I cannot comprehend. And tell me what is become of a most fayre Lady, to whom the last night, I deliuered these Armes, whose most deere sight, I onely with nowe to see Followe mee (most excellent Lorde, replied Don Bellianis) and I will conduct you where you desire: and so they went through those trees, till they came to the Caue, where Don Bellianis had left the Garments, and there both alighting on foote, hee went thereto (amazing Don Contumeliano) what should be the ende of it, and finding the robes, shewing them to him, said.

Knowe you Syr these? He loking on them, answered he did, (hauing ingrauen in his heart, all the tokens of his mistresse) and that shee did weare them, that deserued the rule of all the world: and therefore tell me the rest, for the more I loke on them, the more I meruaile.

Take of my Helme (saide don Bellianis) while the Damzell comes. The Prince Don Contumeliano did so, and gazing on his face, was straight stroken into such a traunce, and rested so amazed, that hee knewe not what to saye: and hadde not Don Bellianis cast his Armes about his necke, hee hadde presentlye fallen downe to the grounde: notwith-

notwithstanding hee was in such case, that the Prince was faine to sit downe, and take the knights head on his knees, whyle ỳ Page went to seeke for water, out of a spring or fountaine, to cast in his face. But before he returned, Don Contumeliano, a little recouered his lost senses, and with a deepe sigh, seeming to send his soule after, complayned in this manner. Ay me, vnfortunate, and disgraced Don Contumelian, vnhappy was the day thou determinedst to see Persepolis, seeing such great disasters lay hidden in these hearbes, to insnare thee. Oh deceite to driue me from deceite, how haste thou manifestly shewed me the small interest I haue in the large dominions of sole conquering Loue, beeing intangled in the deceitfull snares of a Ladies garment. Ay me, how many yeeres haue I shunned habitable cities, now to come and dye in this desarte wood? Oh renowned knight, the best that euer buckled armour, how litle do I now esteeme your immortall victories, since you had the hart to captiuate me with so cunning a slight, hauing committed no fault nor cause, nor giuen any occasion to moue you thereto, vnlesse my starre-crost hap procures my vntimely fatall end. For if you needed my armour, why should you seeke such meanes, to require that of me, which I neuer could deny any, being thereunto bound by the order I maintaine, vnlesse you desired the desolation of my vnluckie life. Which hee no sooner ended, but sounded againe, in such manner, that no remedie that Don Bellianis vsed, could recouer him, nor yet his Page that was returned, which traunce was so vehement, that they iudged him dead, which in deede he was not farre from, being oppressed with so extreame an euill, that hee lay hopelesse, his heart panting with in his body, with his vytall spirits stopt, that he could neither speake, nor breath, that with the intollerable paine, and agony thereof, hee laye groning, and tumbling, expecting the last minute, as those that for want of their naturall heate and moysture, without other disease dye. Which so greeued the greeued Prince Don Bellianis, that the teares ranne downe the eyes of ỳ herroicke

knight like ſtreames of flowing waters, in ſuch aboundance as if his owne deare Ladie were in that caſe: and truly there could bee no danger ſo great, which that Prince would not attempt, then for the ſafety of that good knight Don Contumelian, rather then to ſee him ſo languiſh in that extremitie. Thus lay they a good whyle, iudging him altogether dead, and Don Bellianis through greefe and loſſe of infinit blood, ſo faint, that hee could not almoſt ſturre. Where there comming towards them, from among thoſe trees, a beaſte, the vglyeſt and deformedſt that euer they ſaw, or in the world might be found. This beaſt was ſo horrible in ſight, caſting fyer out of her mouth, that for feare of her Contumelianos Page, fell downe almoſt dead. Don Bellianis as well as he could, roſe from the ground (which hee could ſcant doe taking the Curtleare in his hand, which hee got of the King of Cyprus his brother, and awayted her comming: whoſe furious paſſage making againſt him, was ſo vehement, that ſhe tumbled downe all the trees in her way, and being nigh him, ſtraight vaniſhed, leauing in her place a huge white Piller, with a letter theron, incompaſſed about with much fire. Don Bellianis amazed at what hee ſawe, ſtepped to the Piller and toke the letter, which opening, hee read to this effect.

To thee Supreme and excellent Prince of Greece: The ſage Bellona thy greate friend ſalureth thee: Knowing by my Arte and skill, which I continually vſe for thy ſake, the great and mortall duanger, which through thy meanes ſhould befall the (Solitary knight) & alſo thy ſorrow and languiſhment, therefore mooued me, to make thee know the manner of his recouerie: Wherefore I ſend this letter by a meſſenger of mine, that the Piller of wonders might be manifeſted to thee. Within this Piller thou ſeeſt, ſhalt thou finde his remedy, and therefore leaue it not vntried. Alwaies remembring what I told thee in my lodging, as briefly as I could, for therein all thy labour is aſſured thee. I ſay no more, but reſt thine, as thy ſelfe mayſt teſtifying

Do.

Don Bellianis hauing read the letter, reioyced to see there was yet remedy for the distressed Prince, and so resolutely was casting himselfe into the huge fyre, to see what therein he could finde. But before he could effect his purpose, there came towards him foure valiant knights, against whom preparing himselfe, there also at that time assaultes him foure Lyons, big and fierce, who with their wyde mouthes (as though they cast fire) imbraced him, maugre all his strength, and drew him into the same. Hee seeing himselfe in such perill, letting fall his arc, would haue drawne his dagger, which at his backe he had, but his arme was held so faste, that hee could not sturre it, and turning to see what did it, saw it was a most beauteous Lady: whereupon the Lyons and knightes vanished. Oh God (said Don Bellianis) is this possible I see? Marueil not knight at what you see (replyed the Ladie) letting go his arme, for this is called the Piller of wonders, though it be a long time since any thing hath beene seene, wherein many haue founde remedy for their dispairing loue, yet neuer ending the aduenture. Wherefore with more reason it might bee named the dispaire of Loue. And so was it true, as in the end of the second parte of this Historie shall bee seene: for whose cause many dyed not tormented with that deadly wounde. And seeing for your companyons remedy, you heere haue entred, though it could not bee seene but by a third person with you, you notwithstanding enioy the secrete thereof: and taking him by the hand, went where Contumeliano lay at the laste poynt of life: the Lady carryed a kindled cole of the same fyre of the Piller, which she cast vpon the breast of the Phenician Prince, wherwith hee straight returned out of his trance, somewhat agaste to see hymselfe in that case: and going to ryse, Don Bellianis with much gladnesse imbraced him, saying:

What is the matter (excellent Prince) for your infirmitie hath greatly grieued vs:

My euill hath beene nothing, in respect of the greate gladnesse (replyed he) I conceiue in knowing you, and since I am

free

free of the laste deceit, I intreate you of your speciall fauour, to manyfest it mee, not hyding any of your actes. I am content (answered Don Bellianis) to please you therein, but thanke this Ladie, for your liues libertie. Which hee going to doe, she returned suddenly through that fier, leauing euery thing, as afore. What is this (my good Lord) demanded don Contumeliano? Whereuppon Don Bellianis discoursed that aduenture, and how hee being ready to breathe his last, it appeared, called the desperation of Loue, and how he preued it, with what else happened: And proceeding, said. I knowe not soueraigne Prince the occasion of your extreame passion. Let vs talke no more hereof (replyed hee:) for I assure you, assone as I felt the cole of fyre sette vpon mee, I loste all that vehement dolour and agony: yet not so, but that I shall alwayes remember the deceit done me, hard by the Cittie of Persepolis. And so was it true, for still after when hee salwe the knight of the golden Image, his pulses and spirits would beate, with alteration, like one stroke with an vncouth feare. And I pray you let me knowe your name, with the causes of your other aduenture. My name replyed Don Bellianis) is the knight of the golden Image, which I am sure you neuer heard, and so recounted the rest, how hee came out of prison in a Ladies garments, to vndertake that combatte, as is afore saide. Don Contumeliano greatly wondred, when he knew that was the knight of the golden Image, of whom passing through the vnhappy bridge, hee heard such wonders of, and greatly reioycing to haue met with such a knight, said. I doe now sir knight of the golden Image) altogether beleeue, and confirme the high deedes published of you, and doe render infinit thanks to our immortall Gods, that haue brought mee to enioy the fruition of your company, and so very louingly imbraced together, knitting thrirt them, the inuiolable knot of friendship, which all their life lasted, as the Hiſtorie mentioneth.

Don Bellianis was vnarmed by Contumelianos Page, and his

his woundes by him dreſſed, and attired in Florianaes garments, which refreſhed the dying flames in the heart of the amourous Prince, and agreed togither, that don Contumeliano ſhould ſtay for it in a ſtrong citie, fortie miles from Perſepolis, belonging to the Duke Alfiron, called Bollera, appointing to be with him within thirtie dayes: wherefore embracing againe each other, and taking their leaues, they went to ſee the piller, to read the letters thereon, which by the light of the fire there, don Bellianis thus read.

The Piller of the wonders, for remedie of the diſpairers in Loue, ſhalbe henceforth manifeſted, where euerie one ſhal be remedied according to their meede. And if in Loue he neuer haue erred, or in armes beene ouercome, by the gardians here placed by the ſage Medea: hee that ſo hath not beene, ſhall not proue himſelfe therein.

Well might I haue hoped for remedie (ſaid don Contumeliano) of the gard you here ſaw, if you had not beene here. But I deſire to ſee the end of ſo great an aduenture, and howe it may be brought thereto: for I thinke the letters do not ſhewe it. A little lower I thinke it doth expreſſe the maner how (anſwered Don Bellianis) by him that through diſpaire ſhall hither come. Then good cauſe haue I to proue it (replied don Contumeliano) for I neuer hope for remedie. Don *B*ellianis greatly laughed at what the Prince ſaid. And ſo taking leaue one of another, departed. Don Contumeliano putting on his owne armor, taking the Giants Curtelax in ſtead of his ſword, tooke his next way to Bollen, where he found all the people verie ſorrowfull for the Duke their Lordes impriſonment, who was of them greatly loued. Hee recounted to them what had happened in the battell, and how the duke their Lord was alreadie at libertie, whereat they were much ioyed, and highlie honoured him, who remained there till don Bellianis came, as hereafter ſhall be expreſſed.

CHAP. XXVII.

How Don Bellianis returned to prison, and what past betweene him and the Ladies of the Princesse Florisbella.

DOn Bellianis, being departed from the Prince of Phenicia, arriued in the Citie, when two parts of the night was past, and went till hee came to the Soldanes Palace, not staying any where, though hee greatly desired to know of his Companions. And thinking to finde all the people quiet, hee founde them otherwise busied, and the Pallace guarded with tenne thousande men, with manie light Torches. But hee closely passing betweene them, had nothing sayde to him, thinking that hee was some of the Princesse Auroraes, or Persianaes Gentlewomen: and going vp the Tower, required the watch to let him in to visite the Knight of the golden Image: they thinking hee was a a woman, let him in, demaunding why shee had beene all daye abroade, the knight being so sore wounded? I could doo no otherwise, (replied Don Bellianis) and thereupon entred his Chamber, where Floriana and her fellowe stayed for him: who seeing him come, Persiana ranne to embrace him: so did Floriana, who casting a Mantle ouer her, did rise out of the bed. Don Bellianis seeing it, sayde. It behooues not (sayre Ladies) you shoulde bestowe such fauours on so meane a knight, specially in so suspicious a place. There is no place to be suspected, where such a knight is, deseruing greater fauours then these, euen at the hands of the fairest Princesse liuing.

But leauing this, let vs cure you nowe, that you may tell vs all that befell you abroade: and so making him vnreadie, layde him in a bed, and by their handes dressed him. Which

done,

done, they gaue him his Supper, who eate it with a good stomacke, hauing tasted no foode in a day and a halfe before: and when they woulde haue left him, hee woulde not let them go, because hee coulde not sleepe, and so tolde them all his aduenture from his departing. And when hee spake of Don Contumeliano, they coulde not stande for laughter.

I am much glad of your successe (sayde Floriana) because you shall not thinke vs fooles in what wee haue sayde of your beautie, whereby you may imagine the greatnesse of our Ladie the Princesse Florisbella, and nowe you maye render to vs her counterfeite, for you no more neede it. Let mee yet keepe it, (gracious Damozell) forthat I haue not coated it with that I haue in my Shéelde, to see which is more naturall: for the meaning I knowe is all one. And tell mee the reason why the Soldane did commaunde the Prince Perianeo, to depart his Dominions, which the Princesse Aurora was the other day telling mee, but she was interrupted by a suddaine occasion, and since I haue had no time to knowe it? Wee haue not effectually learned it, (sayde shee) but it is thought the Soudane imagined that hee was in loue with the Princesse: and least hee shoulde attempt anie thing agaynst her honour, commaunded him to leaue his Kingdome, beeing the valiantest knight then knowen in the whole vniuersall world.

What losse had there beene (sayde Don Bellianis) if hee had beene married to her, beeing so good a knight, and so great a Prince. In faith none (replied shee) if for possessions, or anie thing else shee shoulde haue beene giuen to anie, he well deserued her. But we thought, that according to her excellencie and beautie, some of our Gods would descende the heauens, to enioy her on earth. And if hee had demaunded her of the Soldane our Lorde, wee thinke hee woulde not haue denied her him, but he neuer woulde declare his name, which was knowen after the warres of Antioch.

This they tolde Don Bellianis, who was greatly discomforted to heare of the loue betwixt the Knight and the Princesse, as also to heare, that euerie where the wonders of the knight of the Images sounded in his eares, being so highly estæmed in his Ladies Countrey, and so purposed neuer to rest till hee met with him, supposing he should neuer be fauoured of his Mistresse, vnlesse hee should remooue that knight out of her sight, and so said to the Damzels. Hath there bæne no newes of him since his departing, or did he so soone forget the Princesse? No (said they) for it was said, he euerie day came into the court with seuerall horse and armour, and then writ diuerse letters to her, beseæching her to receiue him as her knight, letting her knowe he was Prince of this land. The letter was deliuered to vs, and we fearing some euill to insue thereby, durst not giue it her. But what answer made you (said Don Bellianis) to him that gaue you the letter: None other (answered the Damzell) saue that the Princesse would not answere it. Yet might you haue giuen her it. There is none for their lines that durst haue done so: for besides that, she doth iniurie herselfe, being but seldome sæne, and abhorring such matters extreamly, shee hateth this Prince greatly, because he was the cause that the Princesse Aurora lost her kingdome, with her fathers life, which was Uncle to our Ladie Princesse, and brother to her mother. With that Don Bellianis rested somewhat comforted, and to giue place to his thoughts, praied the Damzels to go to bed, because he would sleepe: which they did: and being withdrawne, they reasoned, that the knight of the golden Image should bee in loue with their Ladie. Beleeue not (said Beriana) if since you named the Princesse Florisbella, he hath not bæne captiuated with her prayses, else why should hee so particularly inquire for her. Will you know it certainly (said Floriana?) Let vs rise softly and hearken what he sayes, for it is not possible but hee shoulde vtter the abundance of his heart, and so rose in their smocks to heare him, who to himself complained, and now and then groned, and sighed so bitterly, as if his heart would breake.

But

But at last with a soft voyce he burst into these passions. Ay mee vnfortunate Knight of the golden Image, and most vnhappie Prince, what accursed Starres, voyde of all pitie, haue conducted thee to Persepolis, to receiue so dissastrous a death? Ah, wretch that I am, whome the power of hearts-penetrating loue, contenteth not with such crueltie to torment thee, but telleth thee thou art not woorthie to serue whome thou desyrest. But thrise happie art thou Knight of the Images: for if thou doost suffer anie passions, and heartes languishment for the diuined beautie of the excellentest Princesse that euer was borne: yet are thy thoughts made knowne to her, where thou mayest immortallize thy selfe, and call thee the onelie blessed of all mortall men. But aye me, more vnhappie farre, then thou art happie, that muste heare the intollerable burthen of my greeuaunces, without comforte, without helpe, and without hope. For though my soules true paine were knowne, where are the merittes to reape the benefite of so large a guerdon? But let Fortune do her woorst, yet will not I leaue, till I see howe long my despised life will labour in the Labyrinth of misfortune. And if I do meete with the Knight ofthe Images, I doo protest by the sacred order I haue receiued, to make it knowen vppon his steeled Burgonet, that none but I deserue the fruition of such thoughtes, though hee more largely do possesse the fauour of time, smiling chance, which I will obtaine, vnlesse my tributarie death denie me passage to effect my will, that hardly will bee maintained with these oppressing torments, where with manie grones and sighes, drowned in a flood of teares, wetted all his bed.

Oh God (sayde Floriana) did you euer heare such a complaint of a Knight in so short a time, not hauing seene her whome hee loues? And I beleeue, (vnlesse hee bee remedied) hee will hardly scape with his life, beeing thus deepelie wounded.

I knowe not what to say, (replied her fellow Periana) for

it is the ſtraungeſt thing I haue ſeene, that the loue of a Ladie ſhould ſo wound the heart of a Knight, againſt whome neither the furie of hell-bred beaſts, nor the ſtrength of mightie Giants can preuaile, and whome wee haue ſeene do ſuch deedes, that ſcarce our ſelues can beleeue: and this is the greateſt of all, that ſo ſtrong a Competitor in Loue, is offered at this preſent to the Perſian Prince. The Knight of the golden Image is not ſo great as you eſteeme him (ſayde Floriana) for I well knowe the high deedes and great ſtate of the other, and though he be nowe diſgraced by the Soldan, he may be reconciled.

All this knowe I (ſayde the other) yet is not hee like to this, if hee ſhould bee compared. And this Knight may bee ſome great Prince, ſince (knowing the other ſueth for her) hee determineth the like. And as for his beautie, you ſee the worlde cannot equall it: and alſo for his valour, we our ſelues are good witneſſes. And for my part, though I were ſure to die, I woulde procure all meanes to effect his deſire, ſeeing the daunger hee freed vs from, and the loue wee bare him, and hee vs, deſerueth all our endeuour in this caſe. In this they continued while they fell a ſleepe, till the next morning, that they againe dreſſed him. And trulie the great deſire he had to ſee himſelfe out of that Cittie, greatly helped his woundes, that the Damzels ſayde he would bee well within ten dayes, and able to trauell, which greatly ioyed him, hoping to be quickly in the great Citie of Babylon, there to poſſeſſe the ſight of his heauenly Princeſſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Howe betweene the Princes Don Bryanell, and Arfileo, with the two kings, it was determined, in what maner the Duke Alfiron, and the Knight of the golden Image should be set at libertie: And howe the Princesse Aurora spake with about it him: by whose counsell she departed from the Soldans Court.

THe prince Arfileo knowing how the Soldan gouerned himselfe with a distempered passion of an vnbridled rage, resolued with the two kings his friends (whō this matter also concerned, because the Sophi had with them broken promise, to procure the end of these affaires: and thereupon concluded, that seeing the Soldan would not free the Knight of the golden Image, and the Duke, by intreatiue meanes, to make it knowne vnto Don Bellianis, and to this ende, the Princesse Aurora shoulde visite him in Prison, and being there, found him conuersing with the Damzelles about the Princesse Flonsbella, who knowing his passion, alwayes deuised discoursiue matter vpon they' Ladie, which some time both pleased, and displeased him, as the speeches accorded with his humour, or delighted his ware-mollified heart, apt for any impression of that qualitie.

Nowe when the Princesse entered, the Ladies rose to receyue her, with that obeysaunce that befitted her state, and the Prince Don Bellianis, about to doo the lyke, was stayed by her, who so soone stepped to him, that hee could not doo it: to whome shee woulde haue knelde, but hee not permitting it, embraced her betweene his armes with more affection then thitherto hee had, because of his conceyued

loue

loue of the Princesse Florisbella, that so dearely loued this Ladie, hoping by her meanes (through the helpe hee shoulde imploy in her seruice) to obtaine his Mistresse fauour. The Princesse Aurora sitting by him, demaunded how he felt himselfe of his daungerous wounds. Well, (deare Ladie, replied he) that seeing I am in such companie, there is no cause to demaund of me that, for if that fortune should lend her force to my harme, her power is so weakened hereby that she cannot. I gladly lay therein (answered she) and yet you are not content to haue hitherto yelded no satisfaction for your cure, but that you will with words ieast at vs. Then were it good we require it (said Persiana) least he thinke to pay vs with conceyts. I can not satisfie you (replied the Prince) according to your merits, or the great fauour I haue receiued: for if I coulde, you should not keep me in prison for it, as you do. What prison, (said they?) if the Soldan would set you at libertie, you should not be staied by vs. If I could so soone free my selfe of that gaole, I meane, (replied Don Bellianis) as I can of this the Soldanes, the griefe I sustaine should not thus torment me. Let vs leaue this talke (said the Princesse) for the time will come, that you shall be free of all your prisons, and these Ladies also satisfied to their content: wherein if you shall disagree, I as vmpere will moderate the strife betweene you, though I now it will not be requisite. But to the purpose, I will tell you the effect of my comming. You alreadie know, how the Soldan (hauing beene intreated, and importuned about it) hath alwayes refused to graunt you libertie with the Duke Alfiron, denying it also to the kings of Armenia and Tessifantie, that greatly laboured your deliuerie. And the last answere he gaue them, was, they should no more immortune him therein, for if they did, it should not a little disadauntage them, that if they became of your faction, he would also apprehend them, as traytors to his state, and person. Now they haue determined to end this matter one way or other forthwith, because the venturous knight, may not stay within the Citie, beeing commaunded to the

contrarie,

contrarie by the Soldan, who knoweth no otherwise, but that hee is come, yet will not they conclude any thing without your aduise. What power haue they (said Don Bellianis?) They haue (repiyed shee) eyght thousand men well appointed, and heere they gaue me your sword to bring you, which I did as secretely as I could, tying it vnder my gowne, and so gaue it him. Don Bellianis toke it, and more reioyced therewith, then if hee had beene presented with a kingdome. The Damzells greatly wondred to see the great riches therof, which was vnualuable.

Tell those knights (most excellent Princesse) that fiue dayes hence, they prepare and haue them in readinesse, al their men, and that in the euening they suddenly assault the Soldans pallace, & procuring nought else but the libertie of the Duke Alfiron: and in any case they take with them, the Princesse Persiana, for it must needs bee so, and you (deare Lady) shall take your leaue of the Soldan, saying you will departe hence, seeing hee will not let me go, and stay for vs in the first Village that wee must passe, beeing thither directed by some of the Dukes folkes, which otherwise would greatly let vs, and I will send these Ladies to accompany you, least wee loose them in this attempt, and so heerein let them not faile: and as for mee, let the Prince Arfileo, Don Bryanell, and the knights, take no care, for so soone as they shall assault the Pallace, I will be with them. You say well (replyed the Princesse) and if it please you, I will aduertyse the Princesse Persiana thereof, that against the time shee prepare her selfe, and not hyde her at the noyse. It will not bee amisse (said Don Bellianis) whereupon the Princesse Aurora, after she had beene there a whyle, departed, leauing Don Bellianis in his chat with the Damzells, and she her selfe went straight to the Princesse Persiana, to aduise her of that which had beene determined, which was highly contented her, that she thought she was not able to discribe the ioy which content, the Princesse Aurora left her, and went to the Lords of the faction, with them partaking of the knight of

the golden Images determination, which greatly pleased them. The kings aduertised the Souldiers, how they would set the Duke Alfiron at libertie, seeing the Soldan refused to doe it, which they ought to doe, being his subiects, and true harted friendes. Whereunto they yeelded, making account, that as in that hurley-burley they should sacke the Soldans Pallace, so they might also vtterly subuert the Cittie, putting it to spoyle and pillage.

Which made them thinke euery houre, a moneth, till they met with the Soldans power, to bee reuenged on him for all his iniuries done them, and for the breach of his word. Many in meane time solicited the Soldan to quietnesse, but nothing would preuaile with him, determining to put the Duke to death, which if hee did not, was, for that hee expected the dayly comming of the Prince Perianeo his sonne, with whose presence, he feared not the whole power of the whole vnyted power vniuerse, thinking then more safely to effect his will. Thus were fiue of the sixe dayes paste, that Don Bellianis had appointed, wherein hee was vppe, and walked about, and in a manner well, and able to beare armour, who seeing the determinate time approached, sent the Damzels to accompany the Princesse Aurora, who seeing it to bee requisit, did accordingly: telling the Sophy, that the knight of the golden Image was wel, and not needed more their helpe. He requested them to remaine in ỹ Pallace, til they minded to depart. They thanked him: for that courtesie, answering they would go attend the pleasure of the Princesse Aurora, whom they found with all her Ladies, in readinesse to depart, and was comming to take her leaue of the Soldan, but ere they went, the Ladies were furnished with good palfraies, who returned to the Soldan with the Princesse, that beeing before him, thus began. Great is the wrong (most mightie Lord) which in thy Land thou haste offered mee, giuing me cause to complaine abroade of thy discourteous entertainment, hauing against all right and kingly iustice, imprisoned the knight of the golden Image,

mage, that accompanied mee, and to bannish from thy territories, so braue a man as the aduenturous knight, with what else thou knowest. Wherfore seeing within thy house, court, and Pallace, these iniuries I receiued, I haue determined to returne vnto the King my Father, though grieued to the hart, through want of the best company that euer Lady had. And I do wish, that with mildenesse you would cutte of the dangers that heereby may insue, that I feare my heart denyeth: which if you will not do at my intreates, euery one wil repute it to proceede of your supreme vertues, saluing thereby all thinges passe.

And remember the blood spilt by the Prince of Phenicia, in the battel, which (through your ingratitude) wil else disparage and scandalise your royall name: being heeretofore reputed for so mighty a king, now to defame and staine thy spotlesse state, with the name of tyrannous cruelty, and bloody barbarisme. And so ended, expecting the Soldans answere, who a little stood in suspence, whether hee should set at libertie Don Bellianis or no: but being altogether blinded with a passionate rage, and selfe-wil, respecting no law, made this reply.

I know not (faire Princesse) why you shuld thus cholerickly argue against me, for the thing, that if I did not, would ruinate the honour of my vaste Emperie, and make mee little feared of my subiects: so that were it not for this, I would willingly giue you the knight of the golden Image. What committed or intended offence, can you impute to the knight of the golden Image (said Don Arsileo, that did come with her) being none of your subiects? or else doe you thinke there shall bee no other Iudge of this matter, but you, which with your vniuste, and blinde passion, wil but badly be determinated.

Great is your pride Prince of Rasia, (replyed the Soldan) to presume to giue me counsell, that neede it not. I commaund you to speake no more heereof, and straight get you out of my Empyre, doing me all the harme you can, for I nothing

eſteeme you, nor the greatneſſe of your kingdomes, whereo you and your companions ſo much vaunt of.

Arſileo became ſo full of choller, that hee would haue replyed according to thoſe ſpæches, but the Princeſſe ſtayed and required him notto do it, diſſembling his anger for that preſent, for hee ſhould haue time to be reuenged at full, making him repent euery thing hee had done: and ſo toke their leaues of him, expecting the next morrowe for their reuenge, and for that time, ſet forwards on their iourney. The chiefeſt Nobilitie of the Cittie, with an infinit number of Knights, accompanyed the Princeſſe Aurora, till they brought her to a little Village fiue myles from the Cittie, where leauing her, they all returned backe.

Arſileo ſæming to go with the Princeſſe, returned alſo ſo ſoone as it was night, the better to paſſe vnknowne, where he ordered what ſhould be done the euening following, commaunding all their men, to go to the King of Armenias Pallace, from whence they might the better march. The Prince Don Bellianis not forgetting what hee had to doe, expected the appointed houre, very attentiuely, as one that ſhould paſſe through the Gates of death, wanting his good armour. The Soldan on the other ſide, was not without great feare, daring almoſt to truſt none, that he would in perſon viſit his watch and cintinells. Like a man that vnaduiſedly, and without ſound counſell, procureth with rage and vnlawfull meanes, to effect a vaine opinion, as at this preſent happened to the Soldan of Siconia, a King moſt puiſſant and mightie, of the Perſians, whom the ouermuch and arrogant pride of his large Gouernement, & Empyre, with ſo bolde and valiant a ſonne as the Prince Perineo, otherwiſe called the Knight of the Images, whoſe equall the world could hardly yeld: did make him violate his royall word (a thing ſo odious in any Prince) which made him feare & doubt his ſafetie in his owne kingdome and Pallace, and among his ſubiects, and not be able to punish them.

And

And also his Daughter, that though at that present shee desired not his death, yet sought she the ouerthrowe of his content, like a mortall and Capitall foe. This nowe was the state of the Siconian Souldane, and great Emperour of the Persian Monarchy, who to compasse and bring to passe, the foolish and madde opinion of a vaine intent, esteemed not the valour of such great Princes, and hardie knights. Wherefore if he escaped with his life, in recompence of his ingratitudes, he may account it no little good. But leauing this, we will returne to our former purpose, as in the Chapter following shal be declared.

CHAP. VI.

The braue and dangerous battell fought in Persepolis, betweene the Princes and knights, with the Soldans power, about the libertie of the Duke Alfiron, with the whole successe thereof.

So soone as the bright splendor of heauens, al-persing eye had ended his diarnal course about the compasse of the orbed earth, some heart-impouerisht knightes through dismaying feare, & pale timerous cowardise, dispaired, (as in such cases, often hapneth) of their sure succesle, whilest the Princes Don Brianell and Arsileo, accompanied with the kings of Armenia and Tessifanie, commaunded all their knights to mount on their horses, expecting farther order. Don Brianell caused Don Bellianis Dwarffes to conuey his Armour, where the Princesse Aurora staied. And charging all their troupes vpon their assault to cry alloude, Phenicia, Phenicia, they issued forth as closely as they could. And for that all the citie was vp in armes that day, there was no regard taken of them, thinking they went to gard the pallace, whither being

come, and finding the guard aforesaid, they began crying, Phenicia, to assault them with such furie, that they vnhorsed aboue two thousand at the first incounter. But they perceiuing the deceit, gathered themselues togither in such sort, that the fight on both parties, wared most bloodie, with the death of an infinit nũber of men: though through the nights obscurity it could not be discerned, yet by these cryes, knew they one an other: for the Souldanes men had their watchwords among them, whereby the battell still continued very fierce, defending so courageously the entry, that for all Don Brianell & Arfileo performed wonders, yet their men could win no aduantage: whereuppon they determined to alight on foote, to do it more easily, when suddainly there was brought so many lights, that one might well know the other. The Prince Don Bellianis no sooner heard the outcryes, but casting his mantle about his arme, drew his sword, and descended the stayres, but ere he was at the foote of them, the guarde beset him, especially the Captaine, that would haue giuen him a daungerous blowe, on the head, to haue cleaued it in twaine, had not he taken it vpon his sword, wherewith he cut his legge in two, but ere hee fell on the ground (Don Bellianis defending himselfe of the other knights blowes) drew the Captaine to him by the sheelde, that he toke it from him, and stepping backe, buckled it about his arme, and with them, he began so braue and so cruell a fight, as if as great a number were with him, but the place being somewhat narrow, hee toke all their blowes vppon his sworde and sheelde, his being so deadly, that in litle time he hadde throwne downe dead aboue thirtie knights: whose huge and monstrous wounds woulde make any afraide to see them, and so oppresst the others, that their clamour and outcryes seemed to ouerwhelme the Pallace.

The Knights being with the feare of death dismaid, and not able to abide the furis of the knight of the Golden Image, turned their backs and fled.

Don Bellianis letting them goe, armed himselfe with one of

of the dead knights Armour, and not longer staying, entred the pallace, wherein, in the great hall, hee espied the Souldane at the light of torches that were there, who with a troupe of chosen knights was going to succour the pallace, which he heard was assaulted by the Prince of Phenicia, for so they thought by their aduersaries clamours. Whome seeing, he conceiued such rage against him, that aloude he said. I haue thee now in time false Souldane of Persia, violater of thy royall faith and word, that thou shalt see how little thou shalt get by my imprisonment, for knowe I am the knight of the Golden Image: who is able to set downe the extreame feare that surprised the Souldane at those words, iudging himselfe at that instant vtterly destroyed.

The knights put themselues before the Souldane to defend him, which Don Bellianis seeing, redoubled his rage, and mangre their force, set so furiously vpon them, that as a wolfe among a troupe of sheepe, he beat them downe togither, who not able to resist him, made him large way to passe by them, which he did to reuenge himselfe at full on the Souldane. Who seeing him so determinate come against him, retyred to a windowe, falling ouer a garden, through which for his best sauegarde, he cast himselfe downe, that according to the fall, it was a great wonder, he beat not out his braines. Yet, it bruised all his body, and dislocated both armes and legges: the like befell to aboue thirtie knights, following him, flying from the knight, as from the touche of a very death-stinging Basiliske.

The Prince Don Bellianis woulde haue done so, such was his hate against the Souldane, but determined first, to ende the battell, thinking afterward, to haue some time to execute his will, and so turning to the knights, sawe them run headlong out of the Pallace, and thrusting him selfe in among them, founde his companions, that hadde forced the Soldans mē to retyre back to the stayres, which they defended like them that expected the fearefull streake of death: so that

Don

Don Bellianis assayling them at their backs, made such desolation of them, that they thought so great a number behinde as before, which so bereft them of their sences, that how to resolue they knew, till the death giuing wound, pierst their daunted hearts, that most of them rested wounded and dead. The Dukes souldiers seeing this, began to sacke and robbe the pallace: the ransaking of whose treasurie, was their chæfest hope of gaines.

Don Bellianis and Arsileo in the meane time rusht into the Princesse Persianaes Chamber, who before her, seemed very greeued, and being by the Prince seene, he aloude saide. It behoues thee Princesse Persiana, to goe with mee, in recompence of the wrongs, and imprisonment your father put mee in, against law and iustice, and thereupon toke her betwixt his armes, and some other knights did so, by two or three of her ladies: whose lamentable shrikes made the Pallace eccho with the noise. And so carrying them, were met by the aduenturous knight, that was comming for her, hauing set at libertie the Duke that came with him, who with such great admiration and exceeding ioye to see his Lady, had almost sowned to the ground.

Thereupon Don Bellianis commaunded the Trumpets to sound the retrait, to withdrawe the souldiers, and meeting with the Kings of Armenia and Tessifanty led them to their owne quarters, which they could hardly do, beeing so giuen to the spoile. But being united togither, don Bellianis charged the Dukes Captaines to conduct their men to their maisters Cittie, that was in the Kingdome of Persia, which they did with great hast, seeing their enterprise so happily succeeded, and also because there was aboue 40. thousand men armed there. And themselues hauing no guides, staied within ỹ cittie, til ỹ morrow, least they should lose themselues in the night. But the dukes men kept on their way so well, that at the appearing of the Sunne, they were hard by the place, where the daye before they left the Princesse Aurora, whither also came the Princes,

and

and there they all alighted to reſt them, where the Princeſſe Aurora welcommed them with the duke Alſiron, whoſe gladneſſe was as great as his ſorrow had bene before, rendring together with the other Princeſſe innumerable thankes vnto the two kings for their aide, promiſſing and confirming an euerlaſting inuiolable bond of amitie, that laſted all their liues, as the courſe of this great Hiſtorie amply dilateth. And not ſtaying in this place, departed thence, where we leaue them, to ſet downe what the Soldane did.

CHAP. IIII.

What the Soldane did, hauing vnderſtood his daughters loſſe: And how Coroliano and Boraldo his brother, followed the Dukes power, with great troupes, with the ſucceſſe of a moſt cruell battell that paſſed betweene them.

WHat tongue is able to expreſſe the many and loude laments, and lamentable cries made in the Pallace, by the popularitie and others, which alſo the Ladies and damoſelles with their great clamours augmented, for the loſſe of the Princeſſe Perſiana. Now the knights that eſcaped the deadly fury of the loſt battell, ſeeing their aduerſaries gone, went to ſeeke the Soldan, whom they found in the Garden, as before is mentioned, they tooke him and did beare him thence to his Chamber, and laide him in his bedde, and hearing the pittious ſhrieckes of the damoſels, enquired the cauſe, which was told him to be, for that their aduerſaries had taken with them the Princeſſe Perſiana his daughter, and had ſet at libertie the Duke Alſiron, and all that more he had not ſeene: which when he knew, the extreame anguiſh and ſorrow of theſe euils, almoſt bereft him of his liuing breath. But thereupon he called a couſin of his, a luſtie and courageous knight called Coroliano, and commaunded him to follow the enemy

with all the people in the Citie, to rescue his stolen Daughter, and that he should spare no mans life that fell into his hands: Which he uttered with such uraged greef, that the teares trickled downe his face. Coroliano did all like the man accustomed in such dangers, assuring himselfe to be auenged on their foes, for all their losses: Wherefore at his commaund the citie straight rechoed with the sound of all manner of militarie instrumēts, and all that were able to beare armes, armed themselues, and went to the pallace, so that in litle time there were gathered aboue 40. thousand men, which in all haste hee led out of Persepolis, kæping no order in their march, ỹ their enemies might not get far before them, who then were aboue 15. miles afore. In this maner they went till they came to a Cittie belonging to the Souldane, where they that night rested, and vnderstanding there howe the enemie determined to dyne the next morrow at Bollera, thought if hee staied, hee should not ouertake them as he would. Wherfore about mid-night he set forwards with all his men, making such haste, that by breake of day hee espied them, descending a hill in good order, which much ioyed him, that he presently commaunded his Trumpets to sounde: which Don Bellianis hearing, looked backe, and sawe so many men make towards them, that they couered the plaine: it somewhat troubled him, wanting meanes to guarde the Princesse. Yet with as much celeritie as the time afforded, hee wheeled his companies about, setting the Princesse at one side of the mountaine, guarded with fiue hundred knights: and seeing his men began to faint with the sight of such multitudes, he incouraged them, reprouing and intreating them to, consider that those troupes were of little moment, and lesse valour, comming half vanquished, beeing onely ledde by the eagernesse of reuenge, for the late slaughter was made of them, which like blinde men brought them to their vtter distruction. This saide, hee take with him the aduenterous knight, the Prince Arileo, the two knightes and the Duke, and placing themselues before their men, expected their aduersaries.

saries.

Coroliano being descended on the plaine, deuided his Souldiers in two Squadrons, the one hee committed to his Brother Boraldo, and the other he ledde himselfe, and imagining what they had done, he commanded two thousand chosen knights, to assault the corner of the mounte, certainly supposing that the Princesse Persiana was there, and so with great clamours they furiously ranne vppon the Dukes men, who with their valiaunt guides were to receiue them, and so terrible were their incounters on that plaine, that aboue foure thousand of Corolianos knights were vnhorsed, by reason that their horses were wearie and tyred, with the haste they had made, that they could scant holde out thitherto. Don Bellianis, and his companions on their side, ouerthrewe aboue sixtie to the grounde dead: and thrusting themselues among their enemies, that they seemed so many furies sent for theyr vtter desolation. But the aduerse numbers were so many, that the dead nothing discouraged the liuing, especially for that Coroliano so animated them, that it may be be saide, hee onely vpheld the battell. Which Arfileo seeing, tooke a Launce from one of his companie, and made against him, Coroliano did the like, and met so furiously, that theyr sheeldes and Armour were piersed, and themselues rested on horsebacke, sorely wounded, then drawing theyr strong swordes, forced each other at euery blowe to bowe theyr heads to the Saddle pummell.

While they were thus in fight, Don Bellianis men through his strength, (and their enemies hauing no other Captaine but the other) beganne to win some ground, with such slaughter of both sides, that neyther parte might well boast of the victorie in the ende. Which thing, when Boraldo perceiued, woulde no longer staye nor expect any woorde from his Brother, but like an arrowe sent from a steeled bowe, maketh his swift way through their airie passage, so he with his fresh Battalion, sette against his aduersaries,

and loking on whom he might with most honour breake his Launce, espied the King of Armenia, that with diuelish rage massacred his men, against whom resting his speare, ouerturned him therewith, doing the like to the King of Tessifantie on whom he brake his speare. Whereat with a loude voyce, he incouraged his fainting souldiers, commaunding them to spare none of their lines, that had committed such rebellious treason. And so passing along he met the Duke Alfiron, who discharged vpon one another the fury of their cutting swords, that Boraldo receiued a litle wound on the head, and the Duke fell in a traunce, and had fallen had he not held by his Horses necke. Boraldo not staying there, passed forwards, proud of the blow that he gaue. At this time the Soldanes men recouered, and began to winne much ground, insomuch that Don Bellianis, nor the aduenterous Knight, being not able with their valour to stay their men, they beganne to retire backe: which when the Knight of the golden Image sawe, like a chased Lyon wanting his praie, he thrust himselfe among the thickest of his aduersaries, that vnhappie was he whom his blewes reached: in such maner beating and ouerthrowing Knights with their Horses, that his Armour was all couered, and his sword reeked with blood, which forced euery one to flie his fury, as doth the fearefull Partridge flie from the deadly pursuit of a towring Fawlkon. For there was no Knight that he met, how valiant soeuer, but with one blow he stroke downe from his Horse. And passing thus along where Arsileo and Coroliano were fiercely in fight together, both which had such piteous wounds, that it moued the Prince to compassion.

Here then arriued Boraldo, and seeing his brother in such case, and to haue the worst, raised himselfe in his stirropes, and (vnable to be resisted by Don Bellianis, that in great hast pricked towards him) gaue him so mightie a blowe backwards on the head, that cutting his Helme, it made a greeuous wounde, and had like to haue fallen, hauing altogither lost his senses. Which so inraged the heart of Don Bellianis, that very blood

seemed

seemed to runne downe his eyes, to see him so vsed in his presence. And in this fury he stroke at Coroliano (that was discharging another blowe on Arfileo) which fell with such huge strength, that lighting on his shield, it diuided it in two, and the sword descending on the Horses necke, it also cut it off, falling on the earth with Coroliano and his Horse. But Boraldo at this instant wounded Don Bellianis on the one side, that pearsing his Armour, it pittcously opened his flesh, and so swiftly redoubled another on his Helme, that it cut all his buckles, leauing his head disarmed. Neuer was there any Basiliske more inuironed, nor Lyon more eager of his praie, then Don Bellianis was now burning in fury of reuenge. And turning vppon Boraldo, with one blowe tumbled his shielde in two, together with himselfe sore wounded to the ground. Coroliano that by this had risen, knowing him by his Armour to be the haughtie knight of the golden Image, on whose ouerthrow consisted the good successe of his enterprise, thrust his Horse into the belly, that he fell dead with his maister on his backe. Which Don Bellianis seeing, leapt from him with great celeritie, which he had scant done, but he was assaulted by aboue 2000. knights that came to aide Coroliano, yet this helpe litle helped him, for Don Bellianis stroke him out of his sences, and looking for Arfilio, saw him in great danger, fighting with Boraldo, in whose behalfe, many there arriued, but he ioyning with his cousin (hauing laced his Helme) wounded so furiously on all sides, that they had incompassed themselues with carkasses of slaughtred men. Yet for all this, they were so oppresst with freshe multitudes, that by no meanes they could mount on horsback, which Don Bellianis perceiuing, doubling his anger, laid about him, that in despight of them, he mounted on a Horse, on which he somewhat easier laboured in the fight, till Arfilio had done the like, wherewith they braue their passage through the thickest of them, who also mounted Boraldo, that was sorely wounded, and carried Coroliano out of battell, which grew more cruell then all the day before. Don Bellianis by meere forced valour,

making his way through the sharpe pointed speares, and swordes, came where the kings of Armenia and Tessalonie were on foote, and like to be taken prisoners, and had they been knowne, they had there lost their liues: who by his arryuall, got freshlie mountings, and together renewed the fight more fiercer then at first. The battell being at this stay, the 2000. Knights that Coroliano had sent, assaulted the corner of the hill, where the Princes were. But the 500. Knights, which were the valiantest of the Dukes whole troupes, left not their charge, but in their places began so fierce a skirmidge, that many fell downe dead on both sides. But the Soldans men being many more in number, brake through them, spoyling their order: whereat the two Ladies, the Princesse Persiana and Aurora, seemed more dead then aliue. But at this time, from the other side of the valley, there appeared the number of 4000. Knights well appointed, which made towardes that place: from whence there was a knight sent to know on whose behalf they came, who a farre of discerned him to be the courageous Prince Don Contumeliano of Phenicia, whose armor they very well knewe, (as is said:) Which greatly greeued the Soldans men, iudging, that of necessitie hee would bee against them, and on the contrarie, the Duke Alfirons troupes were very glad thereof, whose approach reuiued the sorrowfull Ladies. And the Duke aloude cryed, courage, courage, braue knights, and animate your fainting forces, against your feare-frighted aduersaries, for the admired honor of time-wondering Chiualrie, commeth in your ayde. Which hee nothing mistaide, for in the whole Campe, there was none that excelled him, except him that in disguised habit, had subiugated his heart, with great courtesie and bountie, which is the true honour of all braue knights. Hee now being come to the dangerous skirmidge, bravelie ouerthrewe a knight, and drawing him aparte, informed himselfe by him, of all that hee desired to knowe, and turning to his followers, that were all subiects vnto the Duke Alfiron, of whom at Don Contumelianos com-

commaund, a great multitude had before gone to Perſepolis, from Bollera, to ayde the Duke, if their helpe hæ ſhould næd, who hauing hære met the 4000. aforeſaid, vnyted themſelues together, ſo brauelie aſſaulting them that in the corner of the Hill were fighting, that not daring longer to ſtay, turned their backes, and fled towards their other companie, where the furious battell ſtill continued, entring by that ſide where Don Bellianis, was killing his horſe vnder him, ſhe bruzed with the great fall, roſe vp in extreame danger of his life, for mẽ began to giue backe, which forced him with meere ſtrength and ſole labour of his valour, to withſtand the aduerſaries furie, laying on all ſides to get a horſe.

But his enemies ſæing him to be their onely diſtruction, ruſht in multitudes vpon him, no more fearing his death-giuing-ſword, then if hæ had that day hurt none. Whereby though many dyed by him, yet was he ſorelie wounded, both with ſwords and launces, for though they were not great by reaſon of his gød armour, yet through diuers places there iſſued infinit blød.

But his aduerſaries eager of reuenge, procured nought but his death, in ſo much that they would often cloſe their eies and fall vppon him, becauſe they would not ſæ his ſtrokes, and had not he leapt ſometimes hære, and ſometimes there, ſome one would haue got him faſte, which if they did, hæ greatly hazarded his life.

Yet could hæ not ſo defend himſelfe, but that at laſt ſome 50. of them deſpiſing death, fel vpon him together, laying faſt holde on his armes, wherin it behoued him to vſe his ſtrength, onely to get from them, kicking and ſpurning with his fæte, that in the ende hæ fell downe with aboue halfe of them vppon him, and ſæing himſelfe in ſuch daunger, hauing there receiued aboue tenne woundes, ſuddenly ſtept away, ryſing on his fæte on the other ſide, beſtowing deadlie woundes on all ſides, that hære aroſe ſuch greate and mightie clamours

and

and outcries, that the reſt of the battell was nothing to this fight, incouraging one another onely to kill that Knight, on whoſe death depended their victorie.

In this ſeaſon arriued here the Prince of Phenicia, with his company that came in purſuit of thoſe that fledde, and hearing there that great noyſe, ſo bravely ſet vpon them, that they vnhorſed aboue 2000. Knights: with which fury, this Prince preſt through them, till he came where the Knight of the golden Image was, whom he knew (though he neuer ſawe him) by the deuiſe of his ſhield, and ſeeing him do ſuch wonders, ſaid to himſelfe, that not without cauſe he enioyed the name, and deſerued to be called the ſole-worthie of admyred Chiualrie: and being about to alight to giue his Horſe vnto Don Bellianis, the mightie Boraldo, came thither, to ſuccour his men that here loſt their gotten vantage, which they did not on the other ſide, becauſe he valiantly had withſtood the force of the Princes Don Brianell, and Arſileo. And eſpying that Knight, ſtraight knew him by his Armour, thinking him to be he that had ſlaine the King of Cyprus, and fearing his force, durſt not like a good Knight confront him face to face, ſuppoſing that in a battell any thing was tollerable, raiſed himſelf on his ſtirropes, and with his hand behinde his backe, gaue his ſo huge a blow, that it made him bend his head lower then his Horſes eares. Which Don Bellianis perceiuing, hauing knowne ỳ Prince, and thinking he would haue fallen from his Horſe, ranne to helpe him. But the Prince Don Contumelian loſing no whit of his high valour, at ſuch blowes returned vpon him, with his ſword hoyſted aloft, determining at that blow to part his head in two. The other with like intent came alſo vpon him, and at one inſtant diſcharged their rage on each other, that Contumeliano was like to fall. But Boraldo loſt his ſences. The Prince ſeconded another, that therewith he tumbled from his Horſe, and alighting to cut off his head, vnlaced his Helme, and found it in ſuch caſe, that he iudging him dead, let him lye, though it had bene better for him, there to haue made him ſure.

ſure, then for his after harme to giue him his life, as this Hiſtorie diſcourſeth. And going to the Knight of the golden Image, with great courteſie thus ſaide. Mount vpon this my Horſe (moſt hautie Knight, vſurper of anothers heart) and follow the victorie ordeined by the Gods, to all your happie and glorious acts.

The Knight of the golden Image replied. Leaue not your Horſe for me, (high and renowmed Prince) for though I in this battell doe miſcarry, there is nothing loſt in reſpect of your royall perſon, how much the more that this Knights horſe whom you haue ſlaine, ſufficeth me. And ſo mounting on Beraldos horſe, the Phenician Prince did the like vpon his owne, togither ſo ouerturned the fury of the fight, that through want of an infinit number of the Soldans men, his Captains began to yeld the field. Which their aduerſaries ſeeing, ſo hotely renewed their decaying forces, that their enemies were conſtrained to ſaue their liues, by giuing the rained libertie to their horſes, in which flight, being bravely purſued, there was an innumerable number ſlaine, that after the fight, it was found, that of the Soudans men were ſlaine aboue 25. thouſand. With not aboue two thouſand loſſe on the Dukes behalfe. Which good ſucceſſe, being by thoſe Kings and Princes worthily attained, euery one with immortal praiſes thanked him: to whom their deuotion was moſt (being in that whole Campe, but onely three Chriſtian Knights.) This done, they went to meete the Princeſſes that were comming to them: Betweene whome, their courteous greetings and kinde ſalutes, were ſuch, as if they neuer before had ſeene one another.

Euerie one greatly honoured the Princeſſe Contumeliano, ſome for his aide in that great daunger newly paſt, the others (that knew no otherwiſe) not only for the ſame thanked him, but alſo for the ouerthrow he had giuen the fearefull Feliſton, King of Cyprus.

At which time arriued the Duke Alfiron, who ſeeing the Phenician Prince, would haue alighted, being ſorely wounded,

ded, but he would by no meanes ſuffer it. Giue me your royall white handes (moſt excellent Prince) that I may kiſſe them (ſaid the Duke) in token that I twiſe haue receiued my deſpiſed life by your meanes. Don Contumelian ſeeing the Dukes error, would not longer ſeeme to robbe the glorie from the Victor, by ioying in anothers honour, contenting himſelfe with that he had wonne in that battell, and the obtaining of ſuch friends, replied. I will not (Magnanimious Duke, and you heroike Knights) ſuffer your errour no farther to proceed, nor longer vſurpe the honour of ſo high a victorie, from him that bindeth all wandring Knightes in the ordred earth to his furie, and ſeeing there is now no daunger in diſcouering it, knowe (great Lords) that he which hath wonne the immortall glorie of the victory, is your friend, and Lord of vs all, the neuer inough praiſed, the Knight of the golden Image, to whom by a ſtrange aduenture I lent my Armour, wherewith he vndertoke the fight, wherein befell all that you ſawe, and dylated the manner how he found him, and in what habit, concealing nothing but what hapned after the fight. Which heard of the Duke, Kings, Princes, and the Knights there preſent, they highly wondred at his diſcourſe: whereto the Duke thus ſaid. Now am I not (renowmed Prince) ſo much indebted as I thought, for hauing giuen all my ſelfe vnto the Knight of the golden Image, he doeth in taking care for my matters, buſie himſelfe in his owne, wherby my dutie can be no greater then it was before.

You haue nothing ſo much cauſe (ſaide Don Brianell) to thanke him, for what he did in that battell, hauing therein as great a part as your ſelfe, or elſe had he not bene there preſent, very ill ſhould we haue defended his honour. Whereuppon they newly imbraced Don Bellianis, ſaying he had not done well in not diſcloſing himſelfe to them, that they mought with more confidence haue vſed their Armes in that battell.

Speake no more of this (ſaid Don Bellianis) for it is euident, if any honour I haue, or any thing performed therein, it onely proceedes from you. Wherefore it is I that am onely

bound

bound to you all.

Marry if that were so (replied Don Brianell) I had there lost my life, being vnable to defend it. The Prince Arsileo, and the Princesses, disturbed this conference, comming to greete Don Bellianis, where they renewed their thankes. Which done (their men hauing ransackt their enemies campe) the two Kings, the Princesses, Don Bellianis, with the Prince Arsileo, the Phenician Prince, and the venterous Knight, directed their way towards Bollera, by the same discoursing of many things. Don Bellianis being of opinion they should returne and sacke Persepolis, which they might easily haue don, being left without any Garrison.

But the Princesse Persiana, with the other Princes, put himselfe from it, alleadging their men to be weake, and weary of their last trauell. And so at last arriued in the Citie, where well ordering their troupes, and other businesse, went to the Dukes Pallace to repose themselues, where their wounds were dressed.

The Prince Don Contumeliano, lodged with Don Bellianis, at his intreatie, who greatly ioyed with his company, being a Knight of pleasant discourse. Where we leaue them, till we haue set downe what the Souldans men did, after they were ouerthrowne and put to flight.

CHAP. XXXI.

What the Souldanes men did after the battell: And howe they carried newes of their discomfiture to the Souldan.

THe battel being ended in manor aforesaid, part of the Souldans men I suruiued, toke their way to Persepolis, and hid themselues in the woods, and some that were more hardie, closely mingled themselues with their aduersaries, hauing left behind them those things that might discouer them, who heard Don Contumelianos discourse, how the Knight of the golden Image was he that had slaine the fearefull King of Cyprus.

Theſe Knights hauing cloſely hid themſelues, expected the darke nights approach, and the cloſeſt that they might, departed thence, hauing not entred into the Citie, and by the pale reflect of the ſhining Moone, looking about the field for the bodies of Coroliano and Boraldo, to carry them to Perſepolis, did at laſt finde them. Coroliano being in perfect ſence, but Beraldo yet laie in his traunce, being piteouſly wounded, and extreame faint, with the loſſe of much more blood then his brother: and ſetting them on horſebacke, with two Knights behind to guide them, came the next day to Perſepolis, where incomparable was the lamentable griefe, generally of all, all participating of the preſent loſſe, and certainly according to their greeued clameurs, and languiſhing cries, their aduerſaries (had they come vpon them) might eaſily haue taken and ſacked the Citie, for being ouerwhelmed in bloodie teares breaking from their hearts, that they knew not one another.

But aboue all the reſt, the diſtreſſed Soudane of Perſia, with madding rage renting his cloathes, tearing the auncient haires off his graue beard, and blaſpheming and defying his Goddes, with hideous ſhrikes cryed out. Oh vnhappie Soudane of Perſia, Is it poſſible the Goddes ſhould honour thee with ſo large an Empire, to diſgrace thy glorie with this ſhame, and that thou art not able to reuenge thee on thy rebellious ſubiect, that hath ſlaine thy ſonne in lawe, and in deſpight of thee ſtolne thy onely daughter.

But thriſe happie are you Coroliano and Boraldo, that haue in defence of your deare Prince and Countrey, wraſtled with all conquering death, leauing your liues for an immortall trophy of your true loyaltie. And vnhappie am I, that is not able to die, when and where my fame and glorie is drowned in the laſting Center of blacke oblition. But let Fortune do her worſt, as ſhe alreadie hath in times paſt. For I vowe by the immortall Gods, neuer to ceaſe till I haue put to vtter deſolation he and his accomplices, that hath bene cauſe of al theſe my euils.

Thus

Thus as hee was most bitterly raging and crelay-ming against his cruell hate, there entred the hall gate the hor-ses, that as (it is said) brought his Cousens, who (though pite-ously wounded as may be beleeued) spake vnto the Souldane, that somewhat comforted himselfe, to see them not altogither dead, and commaunded them to be laid in a bed, in his owne Chamber, where they were cured. And the other knight begin-ning to discrye their ouerthrowe, said: that hauing almost vt-terly defeated their enemies, there arriued the Prince Contu-meliano of Phenicia with foure thousand men, with whome after a bloody conflict, we rested thus vanquished, and defeated. Oh me, disgraced that I am (said the Souldane) and was that diuellish knight there, that slue the mightie King of Cyprus? I do not now thinke much of your defeature, seeing he and the knight of the Golden Image were against you, yet I assure you I reioyce to knowe they are both there, that our reuenge may be greater. We haue beene greatly deceiued herein, dread soueraigne (said the knights) for that knight that depriued the King of Cyprus of his life, is not the Prince of Phenicia, but it is the inuincible knight of the Golden Image, that onely for the same effect came forth of prison, disguised in habit of one of his Damzels, and repeated all Contumeliano's report. Is it possi-ble (Oh immortall Gods) that such a thing should bee, which I yet dare not beleeue, and surely there was not in the world a man blynder to knowe him then I. For seeing him so wound-ded, and bleeding through his armour, should haue imagined, it could be none but he. But tell me what is Don Contumelia-no? Which should be no bad knight, seeing the knight of the Golden Image toke his name and Armes? One of the valian-test knights in that whole Campe, is that Prince (sayde they) for at two blowes did hee bring your Cousin Boraldo to this passe you see, with many other worthy deedes that in the battell he performed.

These newes much discomforted the Souldane, in which state he continued eight daies, till he was altogither well of his

fall, in which time, he heard by report of many Knights, of the aduenture that was not farre from the Citie. Who greatly desiring to see, went thither, accompanied with many Knights. Where being come, and reading the Letters of the Piller, diuers would proue it, but in a little space, as many as did, were ouercome, and yet could see no bodie.

I haue many yeares ago heard of this aduenture (said the Souldan) and how it was here, and I know that in the Souldan my graund-fathers time, many auncient Knights proued it. And so from that time it was published abroad, that many wandring knights from diuers places, came to proue themselues in it.

The Souldane after this returned to the Citie, and caused his commaund to be proclaimed throughout his large Empire, that euery one able to beare Armes, should within two moneths be at Persepolis. Whereby he beganne to order the mightiest and strongest Army by lande, that vntill that time was euer seene in those parts. For within one moneth, there were arrided in that Cittie aboue three hundreth thousand valiant horsemen, and well appointed. The Souldane sent to many places, as well abroad as at home, to seeke for his sonne, the Prince Perianeo, to leade these troupes against his aduersaries: with whose comming, he so assured himselfe to be reuenged, as if it were already executed. For he not only thought to destroy the Duke Alfiron, and the Prince of Phenicia, but also thought to subuert the kingdom, and King of Rasia, whom he imagined to be father vnto Arsilio, and if those warres happily succeeded, to passe against the Grecian Emperour, whom he knew to be free of the daunger that Don Galaneo of Antioch, had put him in. So that these imaginations made him longer staie then he had purposed, preparing all necessaries for those warres.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.

How don Brianell, required by the Prince don Bellianis, departed towards the Kingdome of Antioch. How the duke Alfiron married the Princes Perſiana, and what ſtraunge things happened in the Iouſts vnto the Princes Contumeliano, Arnileo, and Floriſpiano.

THe Knight (as is ſaid) being within the Citie of Pollera, made famous by their being there, were within fiftéene dayes throughly whole of their woundes, though not of that which the amorous Prince don Bellianis had in his hart, for the loue of the bewteous Princeſſe Florisbella, which had ſo penetrated his tender breaſt, that he determined (vpon the good ſucceſſe of thoſe affaires) neuer to ceaſe till his eyes might enioy her happie ſight, thinking therewith to mitigate the cruell paſſions of his tormented heart.

Thus continuing there vpon a day, taking apart the Princeſſe Perſiana, told her, that he thought it not amiſſe, if ſhe deſired the accompliſhing of her deſires, ſhe ſhould forthwith wed the Duke Alfiron, leſt the chaunges of Fortune might hereafter diſturbe it, and that the Souldan her father would not be ſo cruell, that hearing it would not reioyce to ſée her married to her content. Shée that nothing elſe deſired, ſaid, ſhe would in euery thing accord to his will, derogating in no reſpect from it. Wherefore thanking her for that honour, he conferred of it with the Duke, who thereto agreed, appoynting the nuptialls to be ſolemnized tenne dayes after, which was the time they celebrated a feaſt dedicated to their Mahomet.

All the Knights greatly reioyced at that don Bellianis had done, preparing themſelues very ſumptcouſly againſt the mariage day, ordering a moſt ſtately Tourney in honour of the nuptialls. And in the meane time, hearing of the Souldanes preparations, and innumerable multitudes, neglected not to demaund the aide of all her friends and Allies.

And

And the kings sent to their kingdomes, that all their help might there with spæde be vnited. And so these great enemies bæing thus nigh one to the other, were by their spyalls still aduertised of eythers doings.

The knight of the Golden Jmage much græued to see these delayes, because they hindred and kept him there, from prosecuting his attended iourney: dispayring of hoped ioyes, wanting the presence of the causer of his græfe, which he somewhat lightned, by daily conuersing with the damsels of his mistresse, else otherwise he hardly could haue staied there all that while, which he beguiled with pleasant discourses, with those Princes and Ladies, and one day talking with the Princesse Aurora, about her affayres in Antioch, she said to him, it wold not bee vnnecessarie shee should write vnto the Gouernour of that kingdome, placed by the Prince Don Gallaneo, en whom she reposed great trust.

I thinke it not amisse (answered Don Bellianis) if you suppose it will not disaduantage you. But who shall carrie it, when it is made? I shall want no knight to dow it (replied shee) or if I dow, one of my Damzels shall vndertake the troublesome toyle.

Whereupon Don Bellianis taking pen, vncke and paper, writ the letter, and when it was done, called the Prince Don Brianell (whom as is said greatly desired to be imployed in that Princesse seruice, said to him, hee should bee the bearer of that letter, being a matter to be trusted on none but he. There is no reason (my good Lord) said the Princelle, that you should vndergo such trouble: hauing alreadie hitherto taken so much for my sake, you nœde not now farther indanger your self in these new, & such seldom seen toiles, hauing at my hands receiued no fauour for any. It is no trouble (dœre lady said he) which is vndertakē in your behalf, especially in ỹ aduancing of your glory: and therefore I am incouraged straight to depart hēce. I gladly wold haue accompanied you (replied she) if this present war did not hinder me, wher don Bellianis is also necessarily staied.

It

It is better that you remaine here (said Don Bellianis) for the Prince Don Brianell will quickely returne with answere. And thus they agreed, that the next day he should depart, telling those knights that he went about an earnest matter of his owne, which forced him so to leaue them, assuring them his returne shoulde bee with spæde. And so taking his parting leaue, the insuing morning, he went forwards on his voyage, continuing his dayly iurneyes, till hee arriued at Antioch, where there befell him great aduentures, as shall be set downe in his due place. So leauing him, and returning to our former purpose, the day was at length come, wherein the royall nuptials of the Princesse Persiana, with the Duke Alfiron should be celebrated: against which time, euery one prouided themselues, according to their estate. in such tumultuous times, wherein they dayly expected the arriuall of their enemies: for which cause, least they should suddenly be surprised, they kept in armour aboue eight thousand men, which they had within the Cittie, besides their campe they had without the walles, intrencht about the furthest place of the citie, because one should not trouble the other in their salue. Which multitudes were equally diuided in squadrons and battalions, as they were readie to fight some pitched battell. The day come, the Princesse Persiana issued forth (the contentedst Ladie liuing) shee was ledde by the arme by Don Bellianis, going all a foote, because they would be the better seene, with a soft pace. When they were seene by their armed troopes, they all shewted out aloud, saying. It is a iust thing, that we all spend our dearest liues for the safetie of such Lords, or impall their heads with the imperiall Diadem, which they so well deserue, and therewith discharged so many peeces of Ordinance, and sounded so manie Instruments of all sorts, as it seemed the totall subuersion of the vniuersall world: in which maner they arriued in the temple, where they were married: which done, they returned with like triumph to the Pallace, where the Tables being couered, they dined the Bride and Bridegroome at one Table, with the two

kings, and the three Princes, at another dined many of their Nobilitie. The dinner done, they danced according to their maner, while the knights, maintainers of the iousts entred the lystes. They which that day were challengers, were the Princes Arsileo, Contumeliano, and a Cousen of his, thither came a little before, a very valiant and couragious knight, called Don Florispiano of Sueue, whom being greatly loued of the Princes, easily obtayned the breaking of the first launces, and so ordering himselfe for it, hee beganne the iousts, (the Duke, with the Princes, and all his companie, being mounted on their Theater) which he performed so gallantlie, that ere hee left any Stirrope, he vnhorsed thirtie knightes, all which according to the order of those iousts, hung vppe their Shealdes, with their names, one higher then the other, as the Knight of the Golden Image iudged his deserts, so that manie, onelie to bee counted valiaunter then his fellowe, (though they thought they could not vanquish the maintayner) presented themselues against him, that for haste to bee before one an other, they almost tumbled one vpon an other, calling him no knight that did not iouste.

At this time there came one to the Duke from the Citie gate, and sayde to him aleude, howe there were arryued foure knights, that craued licence to enter, and trie their fortune in the iouste: for hauing heard of those festiuals, they came to ioy their triumphs. There is no reason we should feare any said Don Bellianis,) and therefore let them come, for were they spies they can do little harme. The knights hauing this leaue, entred, whose gallant semblance drew vpon themselues all the gazers eyes, three of them were armed in a rose colour armour, garnished with many little Eagles. The deuises on their shealds were all of one fashion, the one halfe white with blacke Eagles, and the other halfe blacke with white Eagles. The other knight being of a bigger constitution, was all plated in blacke armour, and on his Shealde was portrayted the whole of Fortune, with a knight placed on

the

the toppe thereof, from whence he seemed headlong to tumble downe, dragged by the hand of death, with this Motto.

Well deserueth such a fall,
Becomming deaths cruell thrall:
That doth attempt so rashly.

He seemed to be as braue a knight as euer was any seene, (except him of the golden Image) the knight beeing within the Tilt-yarde, approched where the Duke Alfiron was, and changing his voyce (which the present state of those matters vrged him to) yet that he might be of all heard, said: Which is the valiantest and chiefest knight in this assemblie, whose commaund the rest obeyes? And yet by the immortall Gods, I thinke euery one might rather iudge, each of you fitter to command then to be cõmanded of any. To which words the mightie king of Armenia replied. Why do you require it (sir knight?) whose gallant presence, and liberall speech, deserueth no lesse part in the domination you speake of, then in any thing else. And you may declare your mind to any of vs here, hauing neither more nor lesse superioritie the one then the other, beeing all equall in the bond of true amitie. If it be so (said the knight) I then demaund of you all, to assure mee you will let vs returne as we came, vnknowne, (the iousts finished) and that you require of vs nothing agaynst our willes. The Duke Alfiron thus answered. You may ioust when you will (sir knight) for the assuraunce you demaunde, wee graunt it you, although you needed not to request it, beeing admitted within our Gates. It is so (replied the knight but tell me now, which is here the Duke Alfiron? I am he (answered the duke) but wherefore aske you for him? I do inquire for him (replied the knight) because I thought so braue a knight as hee, and this day married, would haue maintained the field within the lists, agaynst all aduenturers, and not sit and beholde the falling of other knights.

These words somewhat moued the duke, that he was about sharply to answer him, had not the knight of the golden Image staied him, who taking the knight by the hand, verie courteously said. You may sir knight ioust when you please, for I assure you, you shall not want whereon to imploy the valour of your minde, else were it a shame that the Duke should enter the lists on such a day, hauing so manie good knights at his commaund. Then shall we see the bountie of these your knights (replied he in the blacke armour wherupon I take my leaue, and so went to behold the iousts. All the dukes knights made way, that the foure strangers might ioust, which they seeing, one of the knightes of the Eagles, put himselfe against Florispiano, who resting his Launce, gaue one another so fierce incounters, that Florispiano lost his stirrops, and had fallen, but that he helde by his horses necke, and his aduersarie measured his length on the ground, and straight his sheeld was taken from him, and demaunding his name, hee replyed hee had no other, but the knight of the Eagle. Don Bellanis commaunded it to bee set higher then all the rest, which so angred the blacke knight, that he would by no meanes suffer the other two to ioust: but himselfe choaking with rage, ranne against Florispiano, who with the great encounter tumbled to the ground, bravely shiuering their Launces in peeces. Whereat the multitude shouted out at Florispianoes fall. The blacke knight past furiously forwards, and recouered one stirrope he had lost, and Florispiano was conuaied out of the field, and vnarmed, to take the ayre, for the closenesse of his armor had almost choaked him, but quickly recouering himselfe, returned to the scaffold, very glad, as if he that day had don nothing. The prince of Phenicia, setting himself against the blacke knight, met both in middle of their course, with such terrible incounters, that the knight of Fortune (for so was he called in the blacke armor) doubled backwards vpon his horse, loosing both his stirrops, but Contumeliano had fallen, if he had not valiantly staid himself by his horse neck, which went three or foure

steps

steps backe, insomuch that euery one thought hee would haue fallen, but giuing him the spurres, made him furiously passe forward. Greatly astonished was all the beholders, and specially the knight of the golden Image, that demanded of his companie if any of them knew that knight, but none could tell what he was. The beautious Persiana calling the knight of the golden Image, said to him softly that none might heare: you shall know, sir knight, that it is the Prince Beriano of Persia, my brother. Is it possible (said the knight of the golden Image:) It is replied she for I well knowe him, not only by his meeters, but specially by the speeches he vsed to vs: therefore take what you haue to do, for certainly he came with intent to kill our duke Alfiron. He shall not effect his intent so replied the knight of the golden Image) for so many of vs are here for nothing. And so turning to beheld the ioust, commaunded his armour secretly to be brought him. But in the meane time, Don Contumeliano and the knight of Fortune, wounded one another with piteous blowes, that at last the Prince of Phenicia fell to the earth from his horse. The knight of Fortune passed forward, though with mightie trouble, for in all his life, he not receiued so strong incounters. At this time the Prince Alfileo ready to burst with anger, take the biggest lance he could find, and spurred against the knight of Fortune, that also came against him with incredible furie, that both brake their Launces in the middle of their shields, so brauely, that only the handles remained in their hands, making the rest flie in a thousand shiuers, higher then the region of the ayre: the like they did by the second: but at the third time, burning in choller, that the one could not ouerthrow the other, they met with such vehement rigour, staying themselues in their stirrops, and in such anger incountred, that the prince Arfileo came to the ground ouer his horse crupper, receiuing a monstrous fall: and the knight of Fortune lost both his stirrops, and with much a do got hold by his horse mane, staying himselfe most courageously, rather desiring to die, then to fall in that place. The Prince Arfileo rose,

greatly asshamed of his chance before that company. Straight were all the shields of the aduenturers taken away, and in their places were onely set those of the three challengers: for so commanded the Knight of the golden Image, who seeing him of Fortune remained sole maintainer, in great haste began to arme himselfe, commanding his horse to be brought him.

CHAP. XXXIII.

The ende of the Iousts.

Vile things were thus vncertaine, there entred the yarde two Knights, both armed in one kinde of white armour, engrauen with many Imperiall crownes, whose braue presence highly delighted all the beholders: who comming within the Tilt-yard, one of them spurred his Courser with such gallantnesse, that arriuing to the scaffold where the Ladies and Princes were, hee made his horse bend both his knees vnto the ground, making him passe forward, like to a deadly bullet shot from a Canons furious mouth. The other went to the place where the knight of the golden Image was, and as if he knew him & were ioyfull of their meeting, said thus vnto him. If you giue vs leaue sir knight) we will trie our fortune with yonder knight that seemeth to expect the iousts, desiring to saue you the labour of arming your selfe where we be? I repute it as a high fauor worthy sir replied don Bellianis, besides euery one hath libertie to iouste, especially your selfe, whose courage I doubt not, but will attempt farre higher matters. The knight humbling himselfe for that courtesie, said. I beseech you (sir knight) in courtesie to fauor me with your sheeld, seeing mine cannot defend any incounter. It greatly pleaseth me (replied don Bellianis) & in lue whereof, you shall leaue me yours. The knight gaue him his, which was pierst in aboue ten places, by ỹ incounters of lances

though

though it was of a most fine temper: and taking don Bellianis, went to the knight of Fortune, and this began. How shall our fight be (sir knight) for I haue alwaies seen the victorie knowne onely by the strength of armes, whereby none may bee called vanquished, but by default of his owne valor; which is seldome found in iousting, for often therein do knights miscarie, through the weakenesse of their horses, and not of their force. Whilst you craue the combat at my handes, (sayde the knight of Fortune) and not the iousting? You haue vnderstoode mee right (saide the knight of the Crownes) for that is it I seeke for. The knight of Fortune (seeing the picture on his aduersaries shield, so highly to resemble another which he had ingraven in his heart, so greatly desired the combatte with him, that hee thought long till he began it,) with a loude voyce sayde. Then (sir knight) bee our battell as you will, for I am readie for all things. And so taking a strong Launce from his Page, with a sharpe and strong steeled Pike, came out of the listes into a broad field thereby: the like did the knight of the Crowne. But while they were thus talking, the other knight of the Crownes, demanded of the other knights of the Eagles, if they would breake their launces with him. They that nothing else desired, yeelded thereto, and so parted one from the other, beginning the gallantest ioust that in all that day was seene. For the knights of the Eagles were of the best within a great way of them, yet both were ouerthrowne from their horses, for hardly in the worlde was a better knight then hee of the Crownes, whose seemelie bountie was of all much admyred. But at this time the two heroicke warriours the knightes of the Crownes, and of Fortune, spurred their fierie Coursers against each other, that with their furious noyse, the earth seemed to tremble and shake vnder them, and mette like the furie of two tempestuous Currents, breaking through the earth, to runne into the deuouring Ocean, and on their Shealdes staying their Launces, pierced them together, with their armour, and coates of male,

both

both resting wounded on their breasts. The peces of their lances mounted higher then the clouds, themselues meeting with their horses, bodies, shields, and helmes, in such manner, that both horses fell downe dead vnder them, and their masters seemed but in little better case then they, in such a trance they fell, that euery one iudged them dead. Oh immortall Gods (cryed out the valiant knight of the golden Image) what terrible incounters were these? Dead without doubt are the best knights this day liuing, and within himselfe greatly maruelled to see his shield pierced, which till then coulde neuer bee penetrated with any Iron. But this effect worke the armour of the braue Knight of Fortune, against which no inchantment preuailed, being forged by the arte of the wise Friston, as hereafter shall bee shewen. And being about to discend to see if the Knights were dead, sawe both rise togither, who seeing the state wherein they were, more furious then the furious Tygres of Hircania, came one agaynst the other with drawne swordes in their hands, with whose keene edges they wounded one another, with the puissant force of their vntamed armes, that they forced their heads oftentimes to touch their knees by bending, and at last to stay their bodies, set their hands on the ground, and so raising themselues, began the cruellest combat, and most dangerous fight, whose like the beholders till then neuer sawe. These Combattants were so inraged agaynst one another, that they shoulde so resist their cutting blades, which neuer befell them before. But the courageous Knight of Fortune, that greatly hastened the end of the fight, warding a blowe of his braue aduersarie with his shield, ranne within him, and gaue him such and so great a blow, that he cut his armour, with a pece of his flesh, from which wound there issued an aboundant streame of blood, and quickly stepping backe, thrust at him with his sword, that it pierced all his defensiue armes, making him fele the poynt, almost a finger within the flesh.

The Knight of the Crowne seeing himselfe so wounded, and

and seeing his aduersarie so nigh him, wold not strike him with his swoorde, but with one of his hands got holde of his shælde, and so strongly pluckt him thereby, that he had not time to second any more blowes vppon him, and letting his swoord hang downe, drew his dagger, and therewith gaue him two such blowes, that penetrating his harnesse, they deepely opened his flesh, that any other but he could no more haue fought. The knight of Foortune seeing his enemie so vse him, tooke his body ouerthwart in his armes, with such furie, that both had like to haue fallen. The knight of the Crownes did the like, and so strongly prested each other, that through diuers places they lost much blood, in which manner they continued halfe an houre, neuer able to ouerthrowe one another: and so parting asunder, withdrew a while to breathe, but with their fight they coulde scarce stand on their feete, yet walked the best they might, because their wounds might not close with cold blood, least they should not after end their fight: Who may expresse the wonder of the gazing multitude to see so fierce a fight, whose like none euer heard of: and with that the night so suddainly came vppon them, that they could by no meanes end their Combat. The Princesse Perfiana, that very well knew her brother, saide to Don Bellianis.

Suffer not (deare sir) that such knights here dye without cause: for if you do, the whole world will blame you for it: besides that, our royall vertues will therby be scandalized with reproach, to my euerlasting greefe, if it should happen. Don Bellianis buckled on his Helme, and mounted vpon his horse, accompanied with all those Kings, Princes, and Lords, who shewed him as great honour as in the Emperour his Fathers Court he could not haue a greater, and togither they went to the field, in the place where those knights were fighting, who for all their approach, would prosecute their Combatte, calling for knights to ende the same: But the Knight of the Golden Image then stepping betweene them, thus began, and said.

These Iousles (renowmed knights) were begunne only for pleasure, that our Knights might shewe their valour, and not that any controuersie should bee decided in it by the vncertaine ende of so cruell a battell, especially betweene two so braue knights.

Wherefore seeing the heroyke vertues of your vntamed hearts needes no farther experience, hauing amply shewed the rare strengths of your strong bodies, leauing no time for others to do the like since your comming: In the behalfe of this royall company, and knightly presence, and for my owne sake I do intreat you, to be pleased to leaue this Combat in the state it is, procuring on neither side the end thereof: since neither side may tollerate it, giuing no more honour, nor adiudging more praises to the one then to the other. The knights being as courteous as valiant, adorned with no lesse vertue, and bounty, then courage and fortitude: intreating each other to answere, thinking that he which first replied, should be lesse accounted in leauing of the battell: which neither of them wold do, which and so stood, answering neuer a word: the knight of the Crownes seeing, requested Don Bellianis to suffer them to finish they worke.

I may not do so replied he) and therefore do againe intreat you to leaue it: for I should be reputed of little worth, if my intreaties might not so much preuaile with you. The knight of the Crownes requested him to stand a while aside, till he had spoken with his aduersarie, (which Don Bellianis doing the other thus said to the knight of Fortune. You see sir Knight) what great discourtesie ours were, to discontent such Knights, therefore let vs leaue our battell at this time, as it is, and we will ende it thirtie daies hence, where you will. I am content so to do, (answered the Knight of Fortune, and let our meeting be in the Valley of the three fountaines, which is three miles from this Cittie, where you shall finde mee onely with my Page.

This agreed betweene both, the knight of Fortune turned to

to Don Bellianis, saying: (Remember sir knight) how against our wills, you disturbe our combat, for this present time, which makes me rest discontented of you. You haue no reason to say so (replied Don Bellianis) for as I haue perceiued what hath beene done, is to your aduantage, and if you so think, stay with vs, where you shall haue your wounds cured to your content, and after will I answere you as you will. I may not stay answered the knight of Fortune) but hereafter we may meete when all this shall be seene, and so awayting no other answere, mounted vpon a horse, which don Bellianis presented him, and taking his leaue, went out of the way he came And here the Hystorie saith, this knight of Fortune, was the valiant Prince Perianeo, who hauing vnderstood the estate of these affayres, came with intent to doo by the Duke, if he entred in the iousts) what he had done by Don Gallaneo, but seeing his purpose to sort otherwise, went so out of the Cittie, causing his knights to binde his wounds: which done, he neuer rested (accompanied with them which were his nigh Allyes, the one called Don Fermosell of Solstina, the Prince of that Iland, and the others, were Brothers, named Don Crisalaneo, and Don Gramahis of Thrace, till he came to Persepolis. Where (to bee breefe) we leaue out the great ioye that the Souldane conceiued, with their arriuall.

That straight many prepared themselues to march forwards, thinking euery houre a yeare, til they might confront their enemies. And the generall ioy of all was so great, for the arriuall of their Prince, that it very hardly can bee set downe.

CHAP. XXXIIII.

How the Knights with the imperiall Crowns were knowne to bee the Emperour Don Bellaneo, and Fabian of Trebento. And how the Emperour went to the Valley of the three fountaines, to Combat with the Prince Periano, of Persia.

DOn Bellianis rested something malecontent, after the departing of the Prince Periano, thinking he had made little account of him, and was diuers times about to followe him, but that he remembred hee was sorely wounded, and so let him goe, hoping to meete with him ere these Warres ended, greatly commending his high valour, remaining greatly satisfied of the manner of his fight, hauing neuer seene any knight that therein more contented him, except the same that with him combatted, whose admirable courage and supreme excellencie he not a little admyred, and going to him that was going away with his companions, said. You shall not so much discontent me (magnanimous knight) as hee did that with you fought: and therefore I earnestly intreat you both to tell mee your name, and to remayne with vs vntill your most daungerous woundes bee very well cured.

The knowing of my name is needlesse, Syr Knight, for I shall not any way bee knowne, hauing neuer wandred these parts. But if this wil please you, I will vnlace my helme, vpon condition you craue no more at my hands against my will.

While they were thus talking, the Prince Arsileo, Don Contumeliano, Florispiano of Suevia, and the princesse Persiana and Aurora, with the Duke Alfion came thither, and

and thinking he would go, intreated them to stay the curing of their wounds: they humbling themselues for that high fauour, accepted their proffer, and hee which with the Persian Prince had combatted, toke off his Helme, which he no sooner did, but Don Bellianis and Arsileo knewe him to be the Emperour Bellaneo, their Lord, whose sight so amazed them, that they thought they saw him in a shadow, and not in substance, and their present ioy was so great, that it almoste made them discouer themselues. And the Emperour seing them so amazed with ioy, could no longer stay himselfe, but imbracing his sonne, said in the Græke language: What is the thing (sir Knight) that hath so amazed you? Don Bellianis after his dutie done, demaunded of him in ỹ same tongue, what the other Knight was. It is replyed the Emperour) Sabian of Trebonto, sonne vnto the Duke of that Country, who came with me out of Constantinople to seeke you.

All the rest of those Princes wondred at their acquaintence, insomuch that the gallant Princesse Persiana, going nigher them, said with admirable grace. I am very glad (renowned Knights) and we all rest much beholding vnto you, that at our intreaties, you would satisfie our longing desires, in manifesting your olde acquaintance, and not conceale your selues in these tumultious broyles: and am right ioyfull that ỹ knight of the golden Image, hath bene conuersant in such good companie, especially so much resembling you in fauour, and no lesse for valiant deedes of haughtie Chiualrie. The like said many others besides her: for in deede the Prince Don Bellianis so much fauoured his Father, that were they both of one age, hardly might they be distinguished one from the other. Yet the Emperour Bellaneo was somewhat lower of stature, and bigger set then hee, hauing his face honoured with a large beard, something graye, representing there with a high Maiesticall grauitie, with so pleasing a countenance, that it excelled all Knights of his age. The Princesse Aurora (as afore is expressed) hauing seene him in the discouered Castle, when

he combatted against Don Gallaneo of Antioche, nigh Constantinople, knewe him straight, and hee her, but seeing howe dangerous it might bee to discouer him, made as though shee knewe him not, yet thrusting among the company that talked about him, seeing him alone, said that none could heare. I do not doubt but I shall obtaine your Graces pardon (most excellent Lord) if I doe not shewe you that high honour, and royall intertainement, that your Emperious state and person meriteth, beeing forced thereto by this times present necessitie. The Emperour more narrowlye regarding her, recalled her former sight to his remembrance, knowing her to bee shee that had ledde awaye his sonne, and louingly imbracing her, said.

Greater is my entertainement by your kinde wordes Supreme Ladie then any other effect that might bee done by me, beeing spoken of so absolute a Ladie. Then was Sabian of Trebento very louingly receiued of them all, as if hee were their generall brother. And so with the noyse of infinit musicall, and militarie instruments, and an innumerable multitude of lights, they were conducted to the Pallace, where the Emperour beeing layde on a most rich bedde, and hauing his woundes dressed, was left alone to repose his wearie body.

And Don Bellianis taking Sabian of Trebento by ye hand, brought him to the hall, wher they were expected by those princes to supper, with such abūdant seruice, as euery one may imagine: Wher Don Bellianis was demanded by all those Lords, what the Knightes were: Who said, they were his nigh kinsmen, and that the wounded knight was his Vnckle, whose admired valour they all commended.

May we not know (saide King of Armenia, what ye knight of Fortune was, that with him did combatte, he hauing himself so gallantly therein: Wee followed him hither (saide Sabian of Trebento) for on a bridge tenne myles hence, iousting with mee at the first incounter my horse dyed, and after would by no meanes drawe his sword, and so my companion comming to mee, I toke my Pages horse, and both of vs followed him,

till

till wée heard he was come to the Cittie. But by the way we vnderstood of a knight, who is sonne vnto ẏ Sophy of Siconia, called the Knight of the three Images. Is it possible (saide the Duke Alfiron) and certainely I thinke no lesse, remembring his wordes, and had I knowne it, the matter had otherwise paste. And I assure you, I nothing wonder at what he did, for he is the best knight that euer was in these countries, therefore it behoues vs hourely to expect the Soldanes arriuall, for she expected nothing but his comming.

In an ill houre may hee resolue to come (Florispiano) for little is the harme hee now can doe vs. In such talke they a while were in, till it was bedde time, when giuing each other the good night, were all lighted to their chambers. The Duke Alfiron, and the Princesse Persiana, lay together in a sumptuous bed, where they set an end to their long tormented Loues, consumating that night to their greate pleasures, though not well content, remembring within what short time they were to bee besieged, with so puissant an Hoaste, as the great Soldan had assembled in Persepolis.

The valiant Knight of the golden Image, after they were al gone to bed, went to visit the watch and Centinells of the cittie, as his vse was to doe euerie night, and tooke with him, the Prince Arfileo, and Sabian of Trebento, that by the waye tolde him, how from Constantinople, a great Nauie of ships with many woorthie knightes besides the Emperour, with whom also came out his brothers, Don Clarineo of Spaine, and Don Lucidomore of Thessalie, beeing first knighted by their father, all which companies had taken their waye after him, to the kingdome of Antioche.

But the Emperour and my selfe landing by the way in an Iland, at our returne to the shoare found no ship, beeing carryed away by a suddaine storme that arose, and so wee stayed there, ending some aduentures, till wee departed thence, and arriuing in this countrie, came to this Cittie in request of the Knight of Fortune,

Know

know you not (said Don Bellianis) what became of ỹ shippes, or were they all sincked in the tempest? Wee could learne nothing of the (said he) but our better hope is, they are not all lost. What number of Souldiers brought they (demaunded Don Bellianis?) They brought replyed Sabiano) aboue two thousand fighting men, both well appointed, and the cheyfest of all the Empyre. In this conference they spent the better two parts of the night, that at length they returned to the Pallace, and went to visit the Emperour, with whom they staied till it was morning, neuer satisfying himself with asking al that had befallen them in that Kingdome. The Prince Don Bellianis discoursed vnto him, euery thing at large, telling him hee greatly wondred that hee had vndertaken so great toyle, as to come to seeke them.

To discharge the debt I was in (replyed the Emperour) for the succour I receiued at the vnknowne Castle, both of you, and of your Cosin, for our manner (as you knowe) is to make satisfaction in the same Coyne. And yet your dutie was, not to go away, not making your selues knowne. But letting it passe, What was the reason you did so? Wee could do no other wise (replyed Arfileo) hauing promised so to do.

They had thus chatted till the next morrowe, if the Emperour had not sent them to bedde: Which they did, lying in that chamber, and slept til the Sun had the following morning dryed the could deawe on the moyst earth. And rysing out of their beddes, made them ready, and went altogether into the field, where the iouستes were kept, whose pryze the good Knight Sabian of Trebento obtained, with immortall honor, by his braue deedes.

In this manner rested they a moneth, vnmolested of any, by reason of the boysterous colde winter, which kept the Soldane from incamping his Hoaste. In which time the Prince Don Bellianis (though hee greatly delighted in the Emperour his Fathers presence, whom all the rest called the Knight of the Crownes) sustained such grieuous passions, and torments

of

of weart, for the absence of his deare Ladie, that hée often sounned to the death: nothing with him preuailing, the consolating wordes of his Damzels, nor the Princesse Aurora, to whome he made knowen his griefe. But euery day grewe worse and worse, which the Emperour his Father séeing, armed himself vppon a day (though hée could hardly dos it) béeing not altogether well, walked with him out of the Cittie, and inquired of him very earnestly, the cause of his melancholie greefes, charging him not to conceale it by any meanes. The Prince don Bellianis tolde him, he knewe not whence proceeded his greefe, but that he felt extreame anguish of minde, and coulde not conceiue the cause thereof. The Emperour perceiuing some loue passion tormented him, hauing many times séene him sighe without cause, ouerpasse that talke and saide. Tel me, where abouts is the valley of the three fountaines, for I must nedes go thither: It is some three myles hence (said Don Bellianis) whither wée may make an easie walke. Whereuppon the Emperour toke his launce from his sonnes Dwarffe, and sending him with his owne Page backe to the Cittie, they went towards the valley.

The Prince demaunded of his Father, why hée went thither? You shall knowe (replyed hée) I haue ingaged my selfe to the Combatte there, with the Persian Prince this day, and I am determined to méete him there alone without any company, for so wée agreed, and therefore here wée must part, for wée must not go together. Don Bellianis grœued that the Emperour had vndertaken so dangerous a fight, and the more because he might not go to ayde him, if any sinister chaunce should befall. But séeming to feare nothing, said: I will obey your commaunde (deare Lord) séeing you will haue it so, and will returne vnto the Cittie, and excuse you till you come backe. And so shewed him the valley, and departed something better satisfied, to sée what little account the Emperour made of the battell: yet he resolued to frustrate it, as hereafter shall be shewen.

But here we leaue them, till wee haue sette downe the matter contained in the ensuing Chapter, which greatly auaileth this Historie.

CHAP. XXXV.

Who the sage Friſtone was, and what hee did, that the battell betweene those Princes might not bee effected.

In the Kingdome of Persia, where then all those knights were, dwelt a Wiſeman, which was hee that writte this great Historie, called Friſtone, whose equall in the Magicke-art the world: contained not, excelling therein all those of his time, for they procured to learne of him. This rare Magician was so greate a friend to the Persian Prince Perianeo, that all his labour and studie, was to no other effect, but for the good successe of his affaires, consuming the greatest part of his time to that end. For which purpose, hee had giuen him a most excellent, rich, and well tempered sword, that the like was not within ye earthly continent, except that of Don Bellianis, which before times appertained vnto that valorous Knight Iason, the which that excellent Inchauntreſſe Medea had giuen him, when they enioyed their Loues, which she forged vnder the conſtellation and predominance of such Planets, that no inchauntment might against it preuaill.

This sword procured the sage Friſtone, for the vse of the Prince Perianeo, but he neuer could obtaine it, becauſe Medea by her Prophecies had bequeathd it to the succeſſiue heires of the House of Greece, placing it where Don Bellianis won it, by the meanes of the sage Bellona. But this wise Friſtone beeing in the desart of death, where he made his habitation, hee there calling to minde his friend the Persian Prince, came to know, that for all his valour was so excellent, and very fewe that might equall him in strength, he notwithſtanding might incurre wonderous danger. And casting about with his Arte to know the end of that battell, the almightie God would not

suffer.

ſuffer him to finde out the ſucceſſe thereof, reſeruing to his diuine Maieſtie, the knowledge of the euent of thinges, which to none others might bee permitted, and the more hee ſought to know it, the farther he was from it. Which thing ſo confounded him in his imagination, that hée could not thinke what it might bée. Wherefore he reſolued by all meanes to diſturbe the fight, iudging that afterwards, the Perſian Prince might better reuenge himſelfe vpon the Duke Alfiron, for the iniurie he had done his Father, and therefore deuiſed, what you ſhall know in the next Chapter.

CHAP. XXXVI.

What Don Bellianis did, beeing gone from the Emperour, and how hee combatted with the Perſian Prince, and were parted by the means of the ſage Friſtone. And how the Soldanes Hoſte beſieged the Cittie of Bollera.

DOn Bellianis béeing departed from the Emperour his Father, ſo ſpurred his Horſe, that quickly he returned to the cittie, wherein he entred very quiet, ſhewing no manner of alteration, but telling euery one, that by the way inquired of him for the knight of the Crownes, ỹ he ſtayed not farre thence, for Sabian of Trebento, his companion. Hée entred the Pallace, where méeting with Sabian, requeſted him to lend him his armour, to ſupply his preſent néede. May not I accompanie you (ſaid he?) No, (replied Don Bellianis) beſides I will preſently returne. Where left you my Lord the Emperour, (demaunded hee?) Hard by (replyed the Prince) ſtaying for me. Which ſaid, he buckled on Sabians armour, which nothing differed from his fathers: and mounting a horſebacke, he toke his way to the valley of the three fountaines, to méete with the Perſian Prince, and comming to a large plaine, he ſpied the Emperour lying vnder a tree. But taking another way, ſtayed at a place through which the knight muſt of neceſſitie paſſe, if he came: whoſe cõming he

attended, walking on his Horse, and reuolued with himselfe what he had to do, & remembring that knight loued his Ladie, hee thought therein he stood disgraced, which so moued his desires to incounter him, that he iudged himselfe so infortunate, that the same Prince would rather breake his promise, then come. Wherein he greatly was deceiued, for he rather would haue indured a thousand deathes, then in the least degree falsifie his ingaged word. For the day before he marched from Persepolis, with all his troupes, containing aboue three hundred thousand Horsemen, besides Footemen, that couered all the mountaines and plaines they passed by, and hee sent forth with the manner of his march, that none could scape to aduertize his aduersaries thereof: on whom hee arriued with such a suddaine furie, that it had not beene much if they had taken the Cittie at their first assault, but that those valiant Knights were within, whose strength supplyed the want of a competent Armie to resist their foes, and issuing forth in the cities defences, begun so fierce and bloody a battell as euer was any seene.

The Princesse Artileo, Contumeliano, and the Kinges of Armenia, with the Duke Alfiron, went out of the Cittie into their Campes, through a secrete doore, accompanied with all the rest of the chiefest Knights, which they founde in some danger by the aduerse multitudes, with whose comming on all sides, there beganne such cruell massacring of their men, that with in a whyle, the earth was dyed with humaine blood, and couered with dead bodies, slaine by their furious armes: which the Prince Perianeo seeing, thought he could haue no better occasion to depart secretly to the valley of the 3. fountains, where he knew the knight of the Crownes expected him, to end their former quarrell, and that he might the better passe vnknowen, hee had put on a sanguine armour, without any deuise in his shield, in which manner he went till he came to the place wher Don Bellianis stayd, whom he thought did then but come, seeing him walke about, and very glad cryed out, he should there stay, for it was a place conuenient for their combatte.

Don

Don Bellianis turning about, and seeing him so altered in his Armour, knew him not, (but that he thus said. I am the knight that hath established this combat with you this day: for which we are now in a good place, where none shall disturbe vs. You came so disguised (replied Don Bellianis) that I knew you not. But I am right glad we are so well met, to ende our commenced enterprise. But first tell me (said the Persian Prince) since one, or both of vs shall here remaine, what you are? and how you are called? And I promise to do the like. It doth not please me (replied the valiant prince Don Bellianis) for I well know you are the renowmed Perianeo, Prince of Persia. Then if not so (answered Persian Prince) satisfie me with knowing the cause why you beare portraied the picture of that diuine Ladie in your sheeld? It is the shadow (replied Don Bellianis) of that celestial substance, that imperates my heart and soule, and therfore do I continually bear it with me. Oh vnhappy knight. shall in the worlde liue any to dare say such a thing in thy presence? and with a fierie choller that gnawde his heart, hee turned his horse to take his full carreare on the field. The like did Don Bellianis, meeting in the middle of their course with such admirable force & lightnesse, that they seemed more to fly, then on the ground to run. Oh who would not haue desired to see this fight betwixt the flower of the worldes Chiualrie, here opposed one against the other? For the Prince Perianeo had not his like on the vniuerse, except Don Bellianis & his father, and yet his father had Princes his brothers, though they were knighted, had not yet thitherto vsed their Armes. But to returne to our former discourse.

The two Combattants encountred each other with such impetous and sodaine strength, that their Launces being big, and knottie, & their forces without cõpare: all their defensiue armor was pierced, and their launces pass betweene their left sides and armes, and meeting body with body, sheelds & helmes togither, made so huge a noise, as if two towers had met. Don Bellianis lost both his stirrops. But the Prince Perianeo, if he had not

very quickly got hold by his horses necke, he had surely gon to the ground, making many signes of falling, yet gouerned with inp'acable rage, he brauely recouered his stirrops, turning towards Don Bellianis, that also made against him, and regreeting one another with such rigorous blowes, that all the Valley did resound with the noise, so monstrous were they, and where their swordes lighted, from thence it carried armour and flesh, and laid so thicke vpon one another, that they had no time to ward any blow with their sheeldes. In this manner laboured they, aboue foure houres, being so wounded, that it would haue made any adamantiue brest to pittie them, and not speaking any word, withdrew apart to breathe.

The Prince Perianeo thus with himselfe began: Is it possible that the enuious starres that gouerned the fatall houre of my birth, should make me thus vnhappy, to heare a knight in my presence say, he loues thy Lady, and that thou art not able to satisfie that proud fault, with ỹ dearest blood of his stout hart, but suffer him to bring thee to such a point, as to wish the pittiesse stroake of an impartial cruell death? eyther this knight is inchanted, or I am deceiued if his forces be not now far greater then the other time I tried them, and neyther toyle nor labour doth diminish them. But oh, Imperious Gouernesse of my afflicted soule: What is he shall tel thee, that this thy knight dyeth, cõfessing ỹ immoueable faith he owes thee, hauing left no hope euermore to see the glorious splendour of thy diuine beautie. But let the reuoluing heauens dispose the resolution of my destined Fates, as they please, yet one of vs ere we dye, shall confesse the other most worthy of thy seruice. On the other side, Don Bellianis walking, considering with himselfe, the valour of his aduersarie, imagining he neuer felt crueller blowes (but of his father) and that his forces more and more increased, and recording the cause of his fight, thus of himselfe complained. Oh Don Bellianis, vnworthie to bee called knight, and louer of so Diuine a Princesse, to suffer an other knight thus to let thee blood, and not to make his tribu-

tary

tary life do homage to thy sword, whereby thou hast lost both the honour and tytle of a Knight, vnl. ſs thou recouerest it by making his deaths passage through his life.

With the ende of which words, hee became so inraged, that his heart seemed to burne in the fierie coales of his irefull breſt, and so redoubled his most furious courage, that if there had beene foure such Knights as the Persian Prince before him, hee thought that in short time to reduce them all to the mercie of his mortall Blade. With which, both in both hands he went against his lou:-crossing aduersarie, which did the like also, and raysing his Median Sworde aloft, to descend it with a more furie, there appeared before him a Lady altogither like to her, whose Picture had with cruell yoake subiugated his commaunding heart, which said vnto him. What do you here (renowmed Prince of Greece) knewe you not your loue that is towards mee, cannot take any effect, if first you free mee not from this danger?

And therewith hee thought hee sawe foure monstrous Gyants, like a whyrle-winde snatch her thence, and that one dragged her amber guided hayre with such barbarous sauagenesse, that his vnconquered heart resolu'd to liquid blood at the cruel, yet a pittiful sight: and moreouer, an other following the, cried out, let me alone with that vilde wretch, for she must dye by my hand. Which that valiant Prince Don Bellianis seeing, not respecting the sight, pursued that illusion that he sawe, which tooke the way downe the Valley. Hereupon his fine Armes with deuise of the imperiall Crownes, lost their hewe, becomming like those that the Prince Perianeo did weare at the Iousts in Bollera.

The Persian Prince, that nothing of that had seen, thinking his aduersary had left the battel for some other reason, began to follow him, but sodainly his raines were taken out of his hãds, and looking about to see who should do so, sawe before him the dearest frend he had, the Sage Friſtone, who thus saide vnto him.

What

What is the matter (deare Prince of Persia) that you follow whom you know not, nor whether it bee your aduantage so to doe? Take my counsaile: returne to Ballero, for I haue laide such a snare for him, that you shall be fully reuenged on your enemies, and therefore follow not that knight. So this said, he vanished away.

The Persian Prince was greatly amazed hereat, and so great was his hate against the valiant knight of the imperiall Crownes, that he was about to follow him: yet notwithstanding, resoluing the contrary, returned to his fathers Campe, where arriuing, he found the battell still to indure very fierce, through which he thrust himselfe, to helpe his men. Where we leaue him, till we haue erpresst what happened to Don Bellianis, pursuing those inchantments.

CHAP. XXXVII.

How Don Bellianis following the Sage Fristones inchantments, Combated with the Emperour his father, in the Valley of three Fountaines: and how Don Bellianis was led away by the wise Bellona, to ende a certaine aduenture.

THe Prince Don Bellianis, as is said, pursued those Gyants, whom he thought carried prisoner, the Princesse Florisbella, in which pursuite, he had remained inchanted, by the sage Fristone, had it not beene for his sword, yet was hee by him deceiued, seeming otherwise thē he was: which was all the Magician could do. And thus going alōg, he espied before him a knight, armed as he thought in the Persian Princes armor, with whom he not long before fought with. And so soone as they approached togither, all those inchantments vanished away: wherat, like one amazed, waker-

ned

ned out of some dreame, stood still. But the knight that came vp the valley was his father, had, by Fristones deuice his Armour also chãged. For that of Don Bellianis seemed like the knights of Fortune, and the Emperors nothing differed from the same. Who seeing him come with such haste, and without Launce, left his owne, and drawing forth his sword, went to meete him with it raised aloft. Don Bellianis doing the like, there began betweẽ them the cruellest fight that in al that day was fought, making their heads bowe to the saddle pummell with their terrible strokes, so fast redoubling blow vpon blow, that the mightinesse of them stroke fire out of their armour, and made them often lose the sight of one another. Don Bellianis at this time, thinking his aduersaries strength increased more and more, more furious then a furious Beare, hauing lost none of former rage, stroke at him so huge a blowe, that cutting his shield in two, it tumbled to ỹ ground, with a peece of his helme. But the Emperour stroke at him below his shield, that cutting his armor, it also pierced his coate of male, wounding him two fingers deepe in his right side, and entring within him, with a furious thrust, penetrated all his armor to the flesh, forcing him to giue backe two or three steppes, and seeing that was the time wherin he should shew the vtmost of his mightie forces, letting fall the remnant of his shield, would haue with both his hands stroke him on the head. But Don Bellianis seeing the cutting sword descend with such furie, spurred his horse forwards, and closing with him ere he could discharge his blowe, take him twixt his strong armes, and lifting him out of his saddle, shaking the stirropes from his owne feete, he lept with him on the ground, where he opened both armour and flesh with one mightie blow. But ouercome with rage, both at one time raysed their slicing swords, which falling with such strength, the Emperour had the buckles of his helme cut, which fell on the earth, and the sword descending on his left arme, it made him there a greeuous wound. But don Bellianis was so ouerladen with the Emperours blow, that he was forced to set both knees and hands on the ground. And the Emperour seeing himselfe

without the helme, ſtroke his aduerſary ſo ſuddeinly againe with ſuch ſtrength, that he ſorely wounded him on ỹ left ſhoulder, and the ſword ran three handfuls into the earth. But Don Bellianis neuer loſing any ſparke of his admirable courage at any ſiniſter accident, raiſed himſelfe vpon his feete, and turned vpon the Emperour ere he had time to drawe his ſword from the ground. At this inſtant was ỹ Emperors life in wondrous daunger, being without ſhield and helme, and not able to helpe himſelfe with his ſword ſo quickly as hee ſhould. And Don Bellianis being on foote, with his ſword raiſed with both hands, and readie to diſcharge it, did ſuddeinly knowe him, and with the greateſt wonder that euer before hee was in, cried out. Oh Almightie God, in whome I doo beleeue, is it poſſible my handes ſhould commit ſo hainous treachery? And therewith ſtaied his hand.

The Emperour hearing theſe words, ſaid: Knowe you me knight? Or what is the reaſon you end not your fight? Whervnto Don Bellianis replied. I doo moſt humbly beſeech you my verie deare Lord and Emperour, euen by that Lord that hath permitted we ſhould not die by ſo great deceits, that you omit and pardon this my errour, wherein I am guiltie of no fault committed againſt you. And hauing ſaide ſo, vnlaced his helme, whereat the Emperour ſtraight knewe him, which ſtroke him into ſo great an anguiſh to ſee his deare ſonne ſo cruelly wounded by his handes, that hee was faine to ſet him downe, not being able to ſtand on his legges, loking like a man readie to breathe his laſt.

Don Bellianis thinking his woundes were the cauſe of it, ſat him downe, lamenting that vnhappie chaunce, loſing their blood ſo faſt, that it had made two Chanells, as if they proceeded from two riſing ſprings, and ouertaken by the darkſome night, were put into ſo great feare, that they diſpaired of remedie. Eſpecially Don Bellianis, doubting thereby his fathers life, who becauſe the ſuddaine amazement more troubled him then the daunger of his woundes, quickly recouered himſelfe, and imbracing the Prince his ſonne, ſaid.

Oh

Oh deare sonne! tell me I pray you, why come you armed in the Armour of the Knight of Fortune? Did he peraduenture die by your hands? or how is it? for I cannot expresse the alteration I suffer, till I know it.

I weare the Armes of Sabian of Trebento, and no others: for those of the Persian Prince your selfe weares. I haue not chaunged mine said the Emperour. But tel me, what hath befallen you since you left me, for surely we haue bin wondrously deceiued?

Don Bellianis tolde it him. Whereupon the Emperour spake. Surely Prince we haue bene inchaunted, and yet cannot deuise by what meanes: but this is the straungest case I euer heard of, that both should seeme to weare one kinde of armour, and not perceiue it, each of vs imagining the other to be the Persian Prince. And it may bee, that Lady that cryed to you for helpe, was she that so deceiued vs. But let vs part from hence, for we lose much blood.

When they were vppon going, they espied comming towards them, an auncient Matrone, conducted by foure monstrous Gyants, before them was carried a Piller of fire, which lighted them their way, they came with such haste, that ere they could rise, she was vpon them, whom presently the Gyants toke from her Palfray, and kneeling before the Emperour, she required his royall hands to kisse them. The Emperour refusing to do it, toke her vp, and she vnmasking her selfe, was straight knowne of Don Bellianis, to be the sage Bellona, his deare friend. Whereat conceiuing as much pleasure as before displeasure, and accounting all his daunger none, imbracing her, said.

What chaunce hath brought you hither (my good friend) at such a time, which is not without some speciall cause. The great loue I beare you, and the Emperour your father, (replied she) is the cause thereof.

But for you incurre great perill through your wounds, eate this which I will giue you, for with the like medicine you were

afore cured. They did so, and were therewith presently so well, as if they had had no ill at all, and their armour returned vnto their former colour and deuises. The Emperour imbracing her, said.

For Gods sake (Ladie) tell me this aduenture, for it doth more amaze me then any thing in all my life: I will (replyed shee) and hardly shall you know it of any but of me. You well remember the Combatte, you had agreed with the Persian Prince: now know, he hath to his friend a great Magician, in that Art the skilfullest in all the world, this man knowing the great daunger his friend should passe, with the Prince your sonne, did ordaine all that which you haue seene, changing both your armours, that you might slaie one another, each of you thinking you fought with the valourous Prince Perianeo: And trust me, his desire had taken effect, had it not bene for Don Bellianis sword, which for that purpose the wise Medea many yeares before kept in the Caue, where Don Bellianis wonne it, being the man she wished might haue it, alwayes desiring to benefit the house of Greece, as often heretofore she hath done. For so was it written, where your sonne found the sword, if he doth remember the words. I do well remember them (replied Don Bellianis) for thus they said.

This Prophecie is mentioned in the second Chapter: and here explained with effect.

That with this Sword, the liuing should be lost, and the dead put in possession of the recouered, and they restored to their royall blood, with knowledge of their possessors. You see now how it hath come to passe: and moreouer, they said, this should be.

At the time when the fiercenesse of the couragious Lyons, which are you two, by the greatnesse of his skill, which is that of the wise man, called Fristone, that in knowledge equals her, because he hath all her bookes, should be put in greater feare, (but

(but this knew not he, for he did not loke whether the Sword were wonne or no, or whether the valorous Prince your sonne did weare it.) Then the liuing which were lost (that are you two, that being liuing were lost, by the alteration of your Armour, and supposing you already dead, which would haue happened, if the fight had bene ended with the blowe of this Sword, that cut the laces of your Helme) were put in possession of your recouered selues, being restored to your royall blods, (which was at the point vtterly to haue bene lost.) And the true possessors knowne (which are both you,) taking one another for the Persian Prince.

Now I hope you vnderstand the aduenture you haue past, which not without cause you haue accounted straunge. Greatly wondred the knights at these Ladies words, who againe said. But for another cause hath my comming bene, which is to haue with me the Prince Don Bellianis, your deare sonne, whome I must presently vse in a deare imploy, that no lesse concernes him, then his life.

Take vs both with you saide the Emperour. I would willingly do it (replied shee) but that the braue Duke Alfion greatly needeth your helpe, and therefore it is no reason to leaue him alone, and your sonne shall quickly returne againe. And here do as I counsell you, for I well knew this would happen, which made me write vnto you, that you should by no meanes depart from the Cittie of Constantinople, but you would not do it, wherein it had not bene much if you had lost your life. I will not go against your counsell (replied the Emperour) but tell me if my sonne shall quickly returne? He shal (said she) and therefore go to the Cittie, the sonest that you may, and so making Don Bellianis mount on horseback, who had taken the Emperours blessing (which with many teares did giue it him) departed as swift as the winde, leauing the Emperour so occupied with imaginations, whither his sonne might be carried, that he knew not how to resolue himself.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

How the Emperour returned to the Cittie of Bollera, and what happened him in the Souldanes Campe, before hee entred into the Citie.

THe Emperour remembring the Sages words, toke his Launce and mounted on horſ backe, approching the Cittie of Bollera, almoſt by breake of day, which he founde begyrt with ſo many multitudes, that he greatly wondred at their ſuddaine arriuall, and not knowing on which ſide the Duke laie intrenched, becauſe the Citie was round about beſieged, he ruſhed among thoſe Tentes, as if he had bene one of the Centinels, and thus he went till he came vnto a great pauilion, which he thought to be the Generals of thoſe troopes, and loking into it, he ſawe many knights talking with another that lay in his bed, whom he iudged according to his manner and conditions, to be the Sophy, and hard by him, he ſpied armed without his helme, the Prince of Perſia, that had bene cured after by the ſame meanes that he was, their conference was, that it would be good, to giue another aſſault vnto the Citie, for if it were but only to affright them within, it would not be amiſſe. And the Emperour being buſily harkoning to this, there came vnto him, a knight, that was Collonell of ỹ Court of guard, and ſaide. What do you here, you are not in your quarters? I was walking about (ſaid the Emperour) and here I ſtaied to loke vpon this Tent. And therfore ſhall you goe to priſon (replied the other) ſeing you haue no more care. The Emperour ſaid, let vs go whither you will. Here vpon the Collonell turned to foure knightes, and charged them to conuay that knight to his Tent. Which they going to do, the Emperor ſorely wounded, ouerthrew them one after an other to the ground with his lance; and about to do the like by the Colonel, he thruſt himſelf among the Tents, calling out for help. But the Emperour that hereat became furious, reached his launce at the Souldan (that laie a bed with ſuch force, raiſing himſelf on his

his stirrops, which if it had gone straight, he had no more nede to make warre, yet it missed him so little, that the Launce past betwixt his arme and left side, and ranne through all the bedding, nayling it aboue a handfull in the grounde. Which the Knights seing that were talking with him, gathered about him, thinking he had bene slaine, and some went out to see what he was that had bene so hardie to do such a deed: among whom was the Prince Perianeo.

But the Emperour thinking it no wisedome to oppose himselfe against so many, closely thrust among those knights that were come thither, and so past till he came to the farther side of the Campe, at such time that the Sunne beganne to appeare, and fearing some might meete and know him, and so frustrate his intent, he rushed with great violence vppon the guard on that side, and maugre their force, he passed through the middest of them, leauing aboue twentie, pitteously wounded on the earth. And at length arriued in his owne Camp, where being straight knowne, was with great gladnesse receiued, and so entered the Cittie, where the Duke and all the rest ioyfully welcommed him, and being demaunded for the valiant Knight of the golden Image, he replied, he departed from him at the Valley of the three Fountaines, and would quickly returne.

So leauing them, he went to rest himselfe, for he greatly neded it. The Prince Perianeo being come forth of the Tent, thinking his father had bene slaine, inquiring for him that had done it, came to the place where the Emperour had made that slaughter, there he founde some dead, some grieuously wounded, and some in such case as they could hardly liue long, and demanding who had so handled them, they replied they knewe not, saue that a diuellish Knight clad in Armour, bearing certaine Crownes vpon his shield, had done those wonders, and in despight of vs all, hath entred the Citie of Bollera.

By this the Prince knewe, the Knight that would haue slaine his Father, was he with whome he did Combatte, though

though he much doubted it, because his deare friend the wise Fristone, had tolde him, he would set him in place, where hee should leaue both honour and life: yet discontented and amazed he returned to the Tent, where he found the Souldan vp, whereat he greatly reioyced, and with no little gladnesse, demanded how he felt himselfe, and whether the launce had done him any harme? None (replied the Souldan) but what I conceiued with feare of death, and I assuredly thinke that was the knight of the golden Image, for none else could haue the heart to do it. So great is the bountie of this knight, replied ỹ prince) that none might do it but he. In these words you shall see it (answered the Souldane) for he that doth not see his deedes, will hardly beleeue them, my self hauing seene him performe so hautie acts of Chiualry, which else none should haue perswaded me, that any humane creature could atchiue them: for he being wounded, slue the horrible Dragon of the Ryphean desart, and the King of Cyprus assuring you, that when he entered with him in the listes, the blood issued twixt the ioynts of his Armour from his olde woundes. He also discouered the aduenture of the Dispaire in Loue, with many other things which of him you haue heard. I long to try (replied the Prince) how farre his valour doth extend. For I know not whether it be a knight that did disturbe me from ending a certaine Combat, and if it be he, I do protest to procure all meanes til I meete with him.

It is no wisedome (said the Souldan) to hazard your person in so certaine daunger, seeing with our souldiers you haue here, we shall easily be reuenged on them all. I will neuer leaue such a battell (answered the Prince,) for if he be such a knight as he that hurld his Lance at you, he ought with reason to be esteemed. Do you know him, (said the Souldan?) Yes (replied the Prince) for yesterday I did Combat with him in the valley of the three Fountains. But how did you with him (said ỹ soldan?) My friend the Sage Fristone, did part vs, answered Perianeo. In such talke continued they till the ensuing morrow, aduertizing a whole Camp to be in readines against ỹ next assalt.

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The duke Alfiron, and the kings, ſeeing the knight of the golden Image came not, they altogither very ſorrowfully intreated the Emperor, to vndertake the generall charge ouer them all: which he did though vnwillingly. And hauing heard his enemies intent, taking with him the prince Arfileo, & Sabian of Trebento, he muſtred all his men, diuiding them into 5. ſquadrons. The firſt he committed to the leading of the Phenician prince, & with him his valiant coſen Floriſpiano, with 20. thouſand well appointed knights. The ſecond he committed to the duke Alfiron, with al his men, which were as many. The third led the kings of Armenia, & Teſſifantie. The fourth conducted Sabian of Trebento. And the fift gouerned a brother of the Dukes called Sallatell of the valley. And for himſelfe he wold haue none. The Prince Perianeo, diuided his troopes in fiue battalions, and euery one of 50. thouſand knights, and gaue order, that other fiftie thouſand, with all the footemen, ſhould aſſault the Citie, which were aboue fortie thouſand, with ſo manie millitarie engines, that they made ſure account to lay it leuell with the ground, with vtter deſolation of all the knights, at their firſt incounter.

CHAP. XXXIX.

The cruell battell fought betweene the Dukes campe, and the Soldanes troupes, and what therein happened: with the ſtraunge actes the Emperour Don Bellaneo performed: and the terrible aſſaults giuen to the Citie.

THe cold glomy winter being ouerblowne, with the warm approch of the wanton ſpring, wherein the amourous paſſions in the hearts of loue-oppreſſed knights, beganne to ſtirre vp the almoſt extinguiſhed flames, and chiefly in them, that hoped of little remedie for their greefe, continuallie contemplating in the perpetuall captiuitie of their alienated ioyes, when Perianeo the Perſian Prince, deſiring ſpedily to terminate theſe warres in ſtrong battailions, drewe foorth all

his men in fielde, which were so gallant and seemely, as anie that euer were seene in those partes, with such diuersitie of deuises, Scutchions, Ancients, and Flagges, worne about their Speares, which displayed in the ayre, made a most gallant shewe togither, with the brightnesse of their armour, that with the Sunne beames reuerberating on them, seemed so manie Christaline Glasses, and the clamourous noise of such multitudes, being so diuerse, required a Captaine of no lesse valour then his they had. Where though they were verie quiet, yet the neighing and trampling of their horses, and their Maisters noyse guiding them, raising such a rebounding eccho, that they coulde not heare one another.

The Emperour Don Bellaneo, like the man that had beene in farre more daungerous enterprises then those, taking with him the Prince Arsileo, the better to range about the battell) drewe in fielde his furious Squadrons: and perceyuing that the Sunne when her rose shined againste his enemies faces, dazeling their eyes with his brightnesse. Which falling out well to his aduauntage, and desiring to loose no good occasion, passing to the foremost Squadron, commaunded that with a violent furie, they shoulde set vppon them, keeping themselues togither vnited, least their aduersaryes breaking through them, shoulde disorder their rankes. And thereuppon cowching their Launces, encountred their enemies, that were so blinded with the Sunne, that they sawe them not come. But the Emperours men so brauely gaue the onsette, that their aduersaryes coulde not breake their files on no side, whereuppon their slaughter was so great, that in lesse then halfe an houre, that Squadron was vanquished and altogither ouercome, leauing behinde aboue thirtie thousande slaine and wounded. The valiant actes that the Emperour in the meane time performed, are hard to beleeue. He with such valiancie brake through the middle of those rankes, as the Reapers vse in the Moneth of Iulie to reape the Harnest of their ripened graine: so he left on the ground so manie head by head, that none durst confront him, and sometimes

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he so turned his battell, that he forced them to fight, through whome hee woulde with such courage breake, that neither the Princes Arsileo, nor Contumeliano, nor the valiant Florisiano, were able to followe him: but letting him so farre go before them, that they often left him out of sight. At this time the Prince Perianeo seing the disorder of his men, tooke with him Don Fermosell, and the two brothers Crisalaneo, and Gramalis, of Thrace, with thirtie monstrous Giants, and past to his second Squadron, with which gathering the remnant of the dispersed men, encountred the Emperor, commaunding all his troups togither to assault the other side of the battell. But the Emperor that was more politike in militarie discipline thē Perianeo, quickly perceiued his meaning: wherfore calling Florisiano, sent him to tell the Duke Alfiron, hee should commaund the whole battell to vnite it selfe with him, giuing no time to their aduersaries to recouer the aduantage they had ouer them, and that it shoulde bee with the greatest spæde possible, for therein consisted that dayes victorie, ere the Sunne mounted aloft. Which was done so suddenly, that they almost met their enemies. The Persian Prince perceiuing what his aduersaries had done, fearing to bee put to flight, commaunded all his Squadrons to do so, and spying Sauian of Trebento, (which then entred in the battell) thinking him to be the Knight of the golden Image, because hee did weare his armour, cowched his Launce against him, who did the like, meeting with such force, that they were forced to holde by their horses neckes. When vnawares ere hee could remedie it, two fierce Giants that gyded Perianeo, wounded Sauiano so rigorously, that hee tumbled from his horse. Perianeo alighted to kill him, but Sabiano, that was alreadie on his feet, gaue him so great a blowe that he staggered him foure steps backwards: yet so manie layd vpon him with such boystrous blowes, that though he valiantly defended himselfe, yet hardly had he scaped with life, if that the noyse had not thither brought the Emperour, with the Princes Contumeliano, and Arsileo, Florisiano, the Duke Alfiron, and

the king of Armenia, with many other chosen knights. On the other side, there arriued the Soldan with twentie Giants in his companie. With him also came Coroliano and Doraldo, where there began so great a fight, that all the other battel was nothing in comparison of that. But the couragious Emperour seeing his deare Sabiano in such perill, in despight of them all, went where hee was fighting, and not knowing what Perianeo was, ouerthrew him to the ground with his horse breast, and also tumbling downe a Giant, tooke his horse, and gaue it Sabeano, saying. Mount vpon this horse knight, if you meane to liue. Which he did verie lightly, though he were sore wounded, and with their mortall blowes, they quickly cut their passage through their enemes. The Prince Perianeo with extreame rage forming like a chafed boare, taking a horse turned against him whom had ouerthrowne him: but ere he did it, the Soudan, and the Duke Alfiron meeting, and knowing each other, discharged two such blowes vpon themselues, that their heads were both wounded, from whence there ran much blood. The duke here had incurred great danger, if the Emperor had not arriued with his companie, who knowing the Soldane, came so nigh, that raising his sworde to strike him on the head, being so close vnto him, did no otherwise, but with the hilles throw him off his horse, and going after to kill him, was ouerreached backwardes by the Prince Perianeo, with so cruell a stroke, that he had fallen downe. Coroliano wounded him also vppon the shoulder, that hee felt the sworde rase his flesh. Whereupon there began so cruell a fight betweene them, that one side to take the Soldane, and another to defende him, aboue foure thousande knights lost their liues through their obstinacie. On this side where the Emperour was, his men behoe out couragiously, though the Sunne were high, and they wearie with long fighting. But one the other side, the Emperours men lost their aduauntage, vnable to resist their aduersaries. At this time the assault giuen to the citie, was so fierce, that on either side infinite numbers died, that currents of blood ranne through the field: and being fewe within to defende

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the Citie, it easily might haue beene taken. When there came a knight to the Emperour, and said. Withdraw your selfe sir, vnlesse you wil haue vs al destroied: for they within the citie haue neede of present helpe. Is it possible (said the Emperor?) Assure your selfe (replied the knight) that if the Cittie bee taken, which is easily to be done, we shalbe all vtterly destroyed. The Emperour remembring it might be so, and the Sunne being verie high was in their faces, commanded a retreat to be sounded: whereupon there enemies thinking they fled, set furiously vpon them. But the Emperor gathering his men in forme of a Pyramedes, defended them in such such sort, that none miscarried, and they entred safely within they? trenches, where the Emperor leaning sufficient guard, made most of his men enter the Citie, to defend it, where, because the assault of the wall might somewhat slaken, opened one of the Gates, which hee with the Phenician Prince, and Florispiano, valourously kept, by whose handes manie their died, with teene of the terriblest giants in all the aduerse campe. But ouertaken with the darkenesse of the night, they were forced to leaue, and returne to their Tents. The like did the Emperour, King, and Princesse, who leauing good guarde in the Citie, returned to the Pallace, where they were receyued with more outwards gladnesse, then inwardly was conceiued, by the princesse Persiana, and Aurora, the one for greefe to see those wars, the other wanting the presence of her deare friend, the Prince don Bellianis. And supper being ended, the Emperour withdrawing himself to his chamber, was taken apart by the Princesse Aurora, that sayde vnto him. I beseech your Maiestie tell mee what is become of Don Bellianis, for I feare some diaster accident may haue befallen him? The Emperour to comfort her, tolde her all that had happened in the valley of the three Fountaines, and howe the sage Bellona had taken him with her. Now am I verie glad, (sayde the Princesse) for I am assured hee shall haue no harme in her companie. And so giuing one another the good night, departed. The Emperour to his Chamber, and she to hers, with the Princesse Flori-

bellaes Ladies, that were verie sorrowfull for the absence of the knight of the golden Image. The Princesse told them, that the wise Bellona had conducted him with her, which were some better newes for them. In this maner remained the besieged knights, and euery day came freh supplie vnto the Soldane, with which he euerie day assaulted the Citie, sometimes winning, and sometimes losing, as in such accidents is often seene. But they within the Citie receiuing no ayde, had commonly the worst. Where we leaue them, till we haue dilated the straunge aduentures of the knight of the Golden Image, conducted by the wise woman.

CHAP. XL.

What happened the Knight of the golden Image, going with Bellona: and how he proued the aduenture of Brandezar, on the Nycaonian mountaines.

IN maner aboue expressed, the knight of the golden Image posted with such swiftnesse, that by the nert morning Sun, he found himselfe vpon a high mountaine, the barrennest that might be seene, and turning to the sage Bellona, with whō hitherto he had not spoken, said vnto her. Tell me Ladie) what Country is this where we are? for I assure you I neuer sawe worse. We are nowe (replied shee) in the kingdome of Egypt, on the mountaines of the king Nycaon, and there must you end an aduenture, which will be to your eternall benefite: excelling all that hitherto you haue done. And therefore know, that this kingdome in times past being the mightiest Monarchie euer the worlde many yeares: in which time there swaied the empyre, a worthy king called Nycaon, by whose name this mountaine is called, that you are on. This king was at great iarre, with another named Brandezar, Emperor of Babylon, whom so pursued him, that he was faine to immure himselfe within a strong Citie hee possest, hard by the riuer Euphrates, where Brandezar begirt him with a fearfull siege, that hoping of no remedie to obtaine his libertie, was driuen to vse his Art, being

being the greatest Magician in his time, that euer had bin before him, and resolued to do what you shall nowe heare.

One night by his Arte he went to Brandezars Campe, and caused him to be brought vpon this Mountaine: but first hee called his Subiects togither, and counselled them to compounde with those Caldeans, and Babylonians, for hee had determined to leaue them, because his enemies should not execute their reuenge on him. His subiects that greatly loued him, with great sorrowe intreated him to stay, and see howe they woulde spende theyr lyues in his seruice. But hee promising them quickelie to returne, assured them he would ease them of their greefe, caused by Brandezar. And so hee did: for comming hither, hee wrought such inchauntments vpon him, that hee remayned in the greatest torments and paines, that any tongue can expresse: and thinking that if by his inchauntments, hee lost his vnderstanding and sences, hee shoulde not bee reuenged at his pleasure, resolued to leaue in his perfect iudiciall wittes: and for that cause inchaunted a Ring, with such vertue and coniuration, that hee which on his finger weares it, should neuer bee offended by any inchauntment, but inioy his true sences, with all the libertie his heart elle might wish, sauing bodies imprisonment. This might he well do, as the onelie man that in this Arte tutered Medea, being neuer equalled in this science. And a while after, that hee knewe his vassalles were quietted, minded to returne, and descending this mightie Mountaine, mette with his valiant brother, who in his absence was crowned King. Nycaon (as is sayde) meeting and knowing him, ranne to imbrace him. But his brother busied with other imaginations, was greatly displeased to see him, and thinking hee shoulde lose that mightie Empyre by his comming, closing within him, stabbed him, till hee died, and after commaunded his followers, to say they founde him so there, which they did. And he remained king, and Nycaon was buried at his mountaines foote.

That which you neede this present time, is to ende this aduenture,

uenture, and to take the King from the Emperour Brandezar, which you must vse in a deare imploy, and without it you shall liue the grieuousest life that may bee thought. And because you shall haue the greater desire to attempt it, I tell you that the sage Fristone, did ordaine all those things you sawe to disturbe your battell, and is nowe gone into the Citie of Babylon, for hee knoweth by his Art (wherein hee excelles all those of his profession) that if at this present, hee get not in his power the Princesse Florisbella, to giue her to his friend the Prince Perianeo of Persia, hee after shall not so easily obtaine her, (at least by force) and therefore intendes hee by one meanes or other, to haue her for the Prince Perianeo, verie shortly: Wherefore it behooues her to haue that King, that his determination may bee frustrated. And if from the same Emperour, you can take the armour hee weares, they woulde greatly auaile you: for hee that weares them, can not bee molested by ane inchauntment, whatsoeuer, nor be knowne, vnlesse he will himselfe. You haue tolde mee wonders (sayde Don Bellianis:) and is this mans skill so great, that hee may force the Princesse Florisbel'a agaynst her will, and giue her to the Prince of Persia? Doubt it not (replyed Bellona) for more then this can hee performe: and beleeue mee, you shall sustaine for this cause great trauaile, and therefore let vs not deferre the passing time. Heere I commit you to God, leauing you to the valour of your heart, to finish what you haue to do, and take this way, which will bring you to the place, for I must goe no further with you.

Don Bellianis taking his leaue of her, descended downe that way in such haste, that hee quickely sawe before him a strong and well towred Castell, and looking about, coulde finde no Porche, nor Portall to enter into it. But going to the other side of it, hee espyed a little mouth of an obscure Caue: and looking downe into it, hee thought that it descended to the infernall Pitte. And also before it, he sawe a greate Piller of fine Christall, so transparaunt, that

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it seemed to take his light from the sunnes owne light that then shined, on it were set certain letters, made with rich Rubies, to this effect.

The inscription of the first Piller.

The straunge lodgings of Brandezar, in remembrance of Nycaons great reuenge, chief in the Magicke Ault, shalbe concealed from all men, till the strongest Lyon conducted by the little wolfe shal, with extreame necessitie in search of my skill, hither arriue Whose valour must excell the force of my monstrous guardiants, leauing all his fine tempered armor at the entrance of my caue, if he be adorned with Vertue and Fortitude. And thou couragious knight, that wilt this aduenture try, must arme thy self with nought, but the warlike vertue of thy magnanimious hart.

Don Bellianis hauing read the letters, made no other account, then if he had seene none, but animating his resolution, drewe forth his sword, and would haue entred the caue, but ere he was aware, it vanished from his sight. Oh God (saide hee) what strange things be these? Is it possible I must without Armour passe through so fearefull a place? And thinking it cowardize to lingnr so long, presently vnarmed himself, resting in his hose and doublet, and hauing his sword in his hand, kist it, and laid it downe, and recommended his safetie to the Almightie, as a man that had beene going to buckle with death. And considering with himselfe, that in the accomplishment of that aduenture, consisted the vtter losse, or lasting libertie of his Lady, fearelesse hee cast himselfe into the Caue, wherein he scant had set his feete, but hee thought he descended into the most lowest Center of the earth, sometimes stryking his head, sometimes his feete, against the sides thereof, that hee was so bruised, he felt not himselfe, and when he came to the botteme, he lighted with so great a fall, that hee verily thought hee was beaten all to peeces. And rysing with no small paine thereof,

looked to see where he was, but could deserue no more, then if he were in the darkest night, closed within an obscure Dungeon, and searching on all sides for light, at last he espied a little hole, from whence there issued so very little, that he could not almost see his hands. But he was scant at it, when hee felt himselfe drawne backwards, with such force, that hee had almost tumbled with his shoulders on the earth, and turning to see who pluckt him backe, sawe him to be a mightie giant, hauing in his hand a most sharpe and puissant battell-axe, whith him came two Centaures, on eyther side, each of them led a Lyon, the fiercest that euer he saw. They all came towards him to discharge their puissant blowes vppon his head, but hee stepping backe, escaped them all. Heereuppon the Centaures vnchained theyr Lyons, which presently ranne vppon him, and one thinking to rent his body with his sharpe pawes, leapt at him. But he stretching forth his strong armes, catcht him by the necke, and choked him. At this time receiued he two such cruel blowes, that he was constrained to set his knees on the groũd, shedding much blood: And hee seeing the Gyant hard by him, closed within him to wring his axe out of his hands, whereon he cast his mightie strength, the Gyant perceiuing his intent, did also laye fast hold on him: heere the Centaures incompassed him, procuring both to drawe him from the Gyant, where there was seene the most vnequallest wrastling that euer was heard of.

Don Bellianis still persisting in his purpose, was so oppressed with their seuerall inchaunted forces, that he often lost his breath, and they making the caue to tremble euen with the whorse eccho of their resounding Clamors. But heere the Prince setting the vtmost of his strength, wrencht the Fawchen out of his hand, with whith going to strike the centaures, he sawe them all at that instant vanish from his sight, which more amazed him then any thing else, and seeing a little paire of stayres before him, mounted vp, with as great courage, hauing that Fawchen, as if with all his Armour he had beene Armed.

And

And hauing ascended the staires, he sawe a faire Hall, to which he should passe by, so straight a way, that vnarmed hee could harely go throughit, where there was many Armed Knights, that kept the passage, with their naked swords. These were of those knights that were inchanted with Brandezar, being of the strongest then liuing, whom Nycaon left for the Emperors guarde, with no other thought then to loose their liues ere he should be taken away, or kild him that there wold enter. Which Don Bellianis seeing, and that he must needs of necessitie passe through, with an inuincible heart, with the sawchen in his hand, cast himselfe among them, where hee no sooner came, but two of them setting their shoulders against him, most brauely made him go three or foure steps back, wounding him grieuously on the leg, & on his head; and being vnarmed had almost kild him.

Don Bellianis seeing the strength of the Knights to be so great, determined to behaue himselfe otherwise with him, and returning againe to the doore, stroke at them diuers times, thinking they wold giue back, but they had no other care but to offend and defend, not stirring any way. Hereat the Prince warding their blowes with his Fawchen, drewe one of them vnto him by his sheild, with such haughtie strength, made him headlong tumble at his feete, and toke his sheilde from him, and with it about his arme, he rusht among all these Knights, in such a cruell fight, leaping on all sides to shun their blowes. In this manner lasted their fight aboue three houres; that in the end the Prince so behaued himselfe, that he ouercame them all, which were aboue thirtie, leauing them all breathlesse, in the Hall. He entred into another lodging that was next that, being wounded in twentie places, and thinking it no wisedome to goe through such a place disarmed, turned backe, and buckled about him one of those dead knights armor, and so proceeding forwards, till he came to an other staire, and ascending it, he sawe on the toppe thereof, an vgly and infernall Monster, which made against him, and with such force came vppon him, that he tumbled downe those steppes he had gone vppe,

with so great a fal, that in all that day he had not felt such paine, resting so feeble, that he scarce had strength to stand vp. But burning in the flames of ire, for that which befell him, mounted vp againe, with more aduised resolution, least the like might happen to him againe. And being at the staire head, he saw the fearefull monster, accompanied with a horrible dragon, which would also haue throwen him downe, but he leaning his backe against the wall, set the pummell of his sword to his breast, and with the point towards the Dragon, expected his incounter, which was so mightie, that his owne force gaue him his death: for running vpon the sharpe sword it pierced all his body, side through side. But the fierce encounters he receiued of both those beasts, so bereft him of strength, and sences, that hee was faine to sit downe vppon the stayres. Where returning vnto his remembrance, found himselfe in a fayre large greene yarde, in midst whereof, was erected a gallant Piller, like that he saw at the Caues mouth, whereon there was written these words in Caldean letters.

The inscription of the second Piller.

What haughtie Knight soeuer, whose high valor hath hither brought, by the supreme courage of his hear, tlet him enter by that dore, where he shall finde the end of his demand if he excell in strength, the mightie Emperor Brandezer, whose puissant forces neuer any in ancient ages, equalled.

Don Bellianis that longed with desire to terminate with a happie end that aduenture, went to the portall that the letters shewed him.

CHAP. XLI.

The cruel battel fought between Don Bellianis, & the Emperor Brandezar, with whose death the aduenture was ended.

THrough the which he was scant entred, but he heard the pittifullest laments that euer he heard, proceeding from a

knight

a knight that suffered some greate torments, and harkening from whence the voyce might come, he past forwards, entring into a chamber, where he sawe a Knight armed in a fierie armour, that seemed to burne him. Round about him were many snakes and adders, with many other venemous wormes, that now and then bit all his body ouer, and these holding him fast, there came two mightie Basiliskes, which would cast vpon him, all the poyson and blood in their body. Yet sawe not Don Bellianis, who with fierie buttons seared his flesh, which penetrated the verie boane: the intollerable paine whereof, made him breath forth those lamentable cryes, and then began to complaine in this manner,

Oh vnhappie Brandezar, the most vnfortunatest that euer breathed on the orbed earth. May it bee, that the lauish giuer of vnconstant happinesse, the blinde Goddesse of the round reuoluing wheeled chance (for thy greater vnhappinesse and perpetuitie of languishing paines, and plaguing greefe) should subiugate vnder thy commaunde, the vaste Empiers of Babylon, Persia, and Trebisond, knitting thy ioyntes with mightier forces, then any in the vniuersall World: to giue thée new so high a fall, ouerwhelming thee in this present euerlasting miserie, and put thee in such continuall torments by the handes of thy greatest enemie, and that death hath not the power to vanquish thee. Oh is it possible, that hee that for a God was on earth adored, should now tollerate such hellish paines? Oh cruell death, why commest thou not to craue possession of thy due tribute? Oh life why doest thou haunt mee, being harmed with such contrarious starres of malignung, and vnhappie fortune? And with these and other wordes, renewing his olde laments, so mollified the Princes tender heart, that he fell in a deepe consideration of the mutabilities of Fortune, with remembrance of the high Maiestie of that Emperour, being the puissantest both in possessions of Kingdoms and countries, as of propper strength, that in his age liued none to equal him: whose life and Chiualries hee had read being a child. But recoyling that was he whom he must conquer, stepped forward,

whereat the two Basiliskes that lay by Brandezar, leapt about him, and so faste held him, that he could not sturre: the like did all the other serpents, which so cruelly bitte him, that they made his boanes shrinke within his armour. Don Bellianis began to strike on all sides, but it was in vaine, for all his strokes wounded but the aire, which he perceiuing, procured with mære strength to passe away. Here was his labour doubled to no great purpose, yet with often falling and rysing, hæ so toyled, that at length he arriued to the Chayre where the Emperour sat, which somewhat eased him, for all those cruell beastes left him. But Brandezar that by him saw that knight, thinking it was his mortall foe, the king Nycaon, he toke him so brauelie betwixt his armes, that he easilie drew him to him. Don Bellianis letting fall his Fawchon, got also holde on the Emperour, thogh he more willingly would haue with drawne from him, because of the extreame heate that proceeded from his armour, and so continued in their wrastling till they ouerthrewe the Emperours Chayre, and so parting from one another, Brandezar drewe forth his sword, and the Prince toke his fawchon, and began so dangerous a fight, as the like in no age was seene, in short time so mangling their shields, that they had no vse of them, abundantly shedding their blood. Don Bellianis at this time was in extreame perill, for that the Emperours strength was incomparable, and himselfe sore wounden, which he perceiuing, awaited a blowe of the Emperour, which threwe the remnant of his shielde to the ground, and wounded him on the arme, but he gaue him so terrible a blowe on the legge, that Brandezar could no longer stand thereon. But losing none of his courage, defended himselfe vppon his knees, that made Don Bellianis discharge his blowes so faste, that at length thinking to end the contention with one stroake on his head, the Emperour warded it with his sword, and so brauelie thrust at him, that had it taken him full, he might haue called it the laste that should haue ended his life, yet the furious sword ran through his right side, renting the flesh, with the greatest wound he had receiued all that day

Don

Don Bellianis foming through the mouth, for anger of the terrible wound, stroke at the Emperour with both hands, that he cut his thigh in sunder, whereat he fell downe, where within a while he dyed. With whose death, there began so horrible a noyse in all the Castle, with so monstrous an earthquake, that Don Bellianis fell in a traunce, who recouering his sences, felt himselfe well and lustie without any wound, seeing neither signe nor memorie of Castle nor Cane. But before him laydead the Emperor Brandezar, and his knights, which greatly greeued him, there also he found his armour he had left, and putting of those he had on, armed himselfe with them of the Emperour, which were the richest till that houre seene. They were all greene, guarnished with many Basiliskes of gould and Azure, with many vnualuable pearles of exceeding brightnesse, and gyrding his good sword, went to the Emperour for the ring, the wise man had tolde him of, which he take from a finger of his right hand, the preciousnesse of which Iemme, much amazed him: the stone of it was a little Carbuncle, yelding as great light as foure burning torches. But scarce had he taken the ring, when hard by he sawe a Tombe, as faire as euer he sawe any, set vpon twelue Pillers of Christall, which sustained an Altar made of the richest Emeraldes, in all the Orientall regions. Upon euerie Piller stode foure Angelles, holding foure burning torches that neuer wasted. Upon the Sepulcher was a shield held vppe by two greate Creatures, with the Armes of the Emperour Brandezar, and about them were written these wordes.

The Inscription on the shield vppon the Emperours Sepulcher.

Nycaon King of Egypte, chiefe Magician of his time, in perpetuall memorie of his reuenge, for the distruction made of his kingdome, by Brandezar Emperour of Babylon, Persia, & Trebizond, hath erected this monument,

wherein

wherein after the many torments sustained by his skill, beeing vanquished, hee lyeth dead, by his handes that in valour excelleth all Knights in the vniuerse. Heere shall hee lye buryed in this lasting monument, till the Sonne of the braue Lyon, with his force shal ouercome the power of my Art, obtaining the sight heerein inclosed, not vsing the rare valour of his heart.

On the other side of the Tombe was set another shield, expressing the manner of the Emperours inchauntment, and for what cause Nycaon had so done, with the manner of his libertie by Don Bellianis, who attentiuely beholding that wonderous worke, with great ioy for the obtained ring, he spied Bellona in great haste come to him, in manner as hee left her, and demanded of him how he did. Very well (replyed hee) for I haue accomplisht what you commaunded mee, yet am much amazed at what here is, for hauing seene none to do it. Heere lyeth buryed the Emperour Brandezar, and do greatly desire to see what is within. What may not be (answered shee) for our staying may much preiudice vs. Yet I long to trye it (said hee:) But I will leaue it, seeing you will haue it so. And one of the Gyants that came with her, gaue him a shield, according to his armour, but in the middle of it, was his accustomed deuise. Don Bellianis greatly ioyed to see the picture of his Ladie. And so departed in the manner that they came, in little time posting many myles. But heere wee leaue them, returning to the great Magician Fristone.

CHAP. XLII.

What Fristone wrought, after the two Princes battell, to get into his power the Princesse Florisbella, and how she was succoured by the Knight of the golden Image.

THe battell beeing ended betweene the two Princes, as before is mentioned, the sage Fristone hauing cured the Prince Perfiano of his woundes, returned to his habitation in the desart of death: where calling to his remembrance the loue that Perfiano did beare the Princesse Florisbella, which

which she so little regarded, and wherein she continually languished. He cast about with his cõiurations, by which he came to know, that if vnder the domination of the Plannet Marcury that then raigned, he got not to his hands the beauteous Princesse Florisbella, he should after suffer mortall torments: for her sake, yet coulde he not learne, whether the Persian prince should marrie her or no. And in these tumultuous times, thinking easily to get and present her to the Persian Prince, before the end of those warres, taking the necessaries to imploy his Art, arriued in little time within the superbous Babylonian walles: Where he raysed a Tent, the richest and most statelieſt that euer was seene: with so many gallant deuises, that it admyred euery beholder. Which no sooner was seen, but it was presently tolde the Souldane, who with the Empresse Siluiana his wife, and the princesse Florisbella his daughter, came forth to see it, greatly wondring at the rayreneſſe, and riches thereof: from whence they heard so sweete a mellodious consort of musicke, that it rauished their delicate sences: and after so many Trumpets sounded, as if some pitcht fielde were to be fought. Which being done, there issued out of the tent, foure beautious Ladies, cloathed in long rich robes of imbrodered worke, they were led by their hands, by foure valiant Knights, clad all in greene Armour, with many golden starres thereon, with theyr helmes laced on their heads. Which troupe went towards the gallant princesse Florisbella, ỳ was discoursing with her father about the tent, and being before her, they all kneeled, refusing to rise both at her, and the Emperors intreaties. And one of the ladies with a cleare voice, that all might heare her, thus began.

High and mightie Potentate, Emperor of Babilon, Souereigne Monarch of the orientall regions, and most renowmed Souldan, to whose supreme command, the Vniuersall globe of all the orbed earth, might deseruedlie owe tributary dutie, excelling all mortall Kings in honour, and in bountie, by maintaining equall and vpright iustice, through his vaste Empery, with the continuall glorie of haughtie Chiualrie, daily honoured in his Courts, whose magnificent estate, the immortall

Gods do emmulate through the incomparable beautie of his excellent Daughter, for whose sake, his Empyre shall still augment with eternall happinesse, to perpetuall ages. Know, that the deare hope to finde redresse for our troubled thoughts, hath brought vs to this imperiall Cittie, where if our hopes bee frustrated of theyr desires, we will returne dispayring of future, remedie for our greefes, wanting it here, where neuer any was denied.

Wherefore of thee, and of this glorious Princesse, wee must obtaine a boone, before we do explayne the cause of our comming. Require what you will (said the Souldane) for my desire is so great to knowe this aduenture, that not onely one, but twentie, I do graunt you: and therefore make vs partakers of your greeuances. Whereuppon they rose, and the Damozell returning to her former purpose, thus saide.

In yonder Tent (most dread Lord) is the valiaunt King Gorgiana, of Soria, cheefe Lord of that Land, whome you well knowe, being your neere Ally, that being in his peacefull kingdome, ordering of certaine Tryumphs, wherein himselfe with most of his best knights should bee in, thyther came many straungers, and forreiners, brought by the fame of his beautious Daughter, then thought the fayrest Lady liuing. And among many that there arriued, shee was demaunded of her father for wife, by the great Magician, Herodiano, king of the Ile of pearles, one of the braueſt Gyants hitherto seene. But he being informed what he was, returned him, that his daughter being too young, was not determined yet to marrie: therefore he craued his pardon. Which answer, highly bering Herodiano, that they being the next day in the ordained Iouſtes, there appeared on the one side of the field, these foure knights that here you see, who rushing within the Tourney, in short space ouerthrew aboue one hundred knights, with such deepe woundes, that most of them could no more rise. And they like furious Dragons ranne vp and downe the fielde, that none durſt

durſt abide their furie. Which the King ſeing, encountred them with tenne knights, againſt whom onely three went, and the other imbraced the King in ſuch cruell manner, that both fell downe, and the reſt left his knights deadly wounded.

Then on the ſuddaine, appeared the Tent you ponder ſee, in which the king was ſet, with his Daughter, and theſe foure knights remained as their keepers, whome no humaine power is able to ouerrome, becauſe they are inchaunted: and within the ſpace of foure dayes, they vanquiſhed aboue foure thouſand knights that came to liberate their king, which not a little greeued vs. But in the ende, ſending for the counſaile of a wiſe man, a great freend vnto our king, wee receiued this aunſwere: that the impriſonment of the king and his daughter could not be remedied, but by a Ladie, whoſe beautie ſhould excell the honourable Princeſſe Meridianaes, and that finding her, ſhe ſhould proue the aduenture of the Tent, in which the Princeſſe would giue her a ſworde, which in her hand ſhe holdeth, with which thoſe knights ſhould be vanquiſhed, and the inchantment ended. Vnd for this effect, he would worke, that the Tent ſhoulde bee brought where we would wiſhe to haue it, wherein wee foure might very ſafelye goe, for onely theſe ſame knights ſhoulde bee our cheefe defenders.

In this manner haue we in ſhort time trauailed through moſt part of Paganiſme, but neuer could finde any that did ſurpaſſe the beautie of our Princeſſe Meridiana. And by the way, hearing the fame propogated through this Eaſterne world, of the rare, and ſoly excellent beautie of the Princeſſe thy deare Daughter, we are hither come to intreat thee to ſuffer this aduenture tryed in thy court, which will no little entermize thy great glorie, ſetting an end to our many toiles, which we haue, and elſe ſhall ſuſtaine. And this is the bone which you and your excellent Daughter the princeſſe Floriſbella haue granted vs.

The Soudane reſted highly aſtoniſhed, at the Ladyes

tale, greatly pitying the misaduenture happened to the King Gorgiano, his kinesman, desiring to vndergoe any perrill for his libertie, and answering the Lady, said. It greatly greeueth me (gracious Ladies) that this mischance hath befallen your King, and his Daughter, and it would highly content me, that you may finde remedie in my Court. But tell mee the Lady, that proouing it, and not ending it, doth shee incurre any danger? None (replied she) for she that doth not excell the Princesse in beautie, may not enter therein, and from the doore may you see what is within.

I am contented (said the Souldane) that the aduenture bee tryed. But I will first see the Combatting of the Knights, for I beleeue in my Court there are such that think to saue the Ladies that labour. Your will be done (repli'd the damzel though it be better that your Knights do not so indanger themselues, for their toyle will be in vaine. Yet for all this will I haue it so, said the Souldane. And thereuppon cõmanded all his knights, to try the aduenture: and the Damzels with their knights, returned to the tent, in the entring whereof, it seemed to open. in the middest, where straight was seene a throane with thyrtie steppes, which seemed made of pure Christall, in the middle thereof, sat the King Gorgiano, armed with all his Armour, he leand his hand vppon his Chayre, and on his hand, his head, seeming very mellancholy: at his right hand, sat the beauteous and gallant Princesse Meredian, in like manner as her Father. On the toppe of all the Throane, appeared Cupid the blinde GOD of loue, with his bowe and arrowes, whose making was so artificiall and naturall, that euery one thought him aliue. At his feete lay a Knight sore wounded, with an arrow in his brest, who seemed with one hand to crake mercie, but with the other, hee held a scrowle very fairly written with plaine Caldean letters, expressing for what reason the King Gorgiano was imprisoned.

Heere then arriued all the Souldanes Knights, in number aboue three thousand, and were the valiantest in all his whole Empyre.

The

The first that would proue the aduenture, was a Cousen of his, called Baltasano, of Numidia, who as it seemed, was chiefe ouer the rest: he was armed in a rose colour Armour, and taking with him two knights, would haue entred the tent, but the inchaunted knights that defended it, leauing one to keepe it, made against them, and at the first incounters ended the strife, casting the Soldans knightes on the ground. This done, the inchaunted knightes began to range about the field, that within a whyle they left none to withstand them, and hauing no more to do, returned so quietlie to their tent, as if they had done nothing. The Soldan greatly amazed at this suddaine exployte, had farre more desire then before to haue the aduenture ended, wherefore first commanded the dead and wounded knights to bee carryed away, and then willed the Ladies to trye their Fortunes, highlie praising the knightes valour, thinking them inuincible. Many Ladies tryed their chaunce, but none coulde enter the Tent, who returned as shamefaste, as the knightes had beene dishonoured by their falles. Which the Princesse Florisbella seeing, toke by the hand the beauteous Mattarosa her Cousen, beeing one of the gallantest Ladies in all her Fathers Empiers, and said to her. Shall wee (faire Cousen) proue this aduenture, although for my parte, I knowe where so many haue failed, I shall do but little. Euen as please you (replyed the faire Mattarosa though I perceiue you mocke vs all, but I will trye it first, because I will not rest with imagination, that you ended it by first proouing it, which then will be said you did beeing the fairest, which I will not yeelo vnto, the contrarie beeing so well knowne. It pleaseth you o least (said the Princesse) but for the trying of this aduenture I would bee glad that you might end it, to saue me from that daunger and feare: and wee shall after trye the aduantage you haue in that other. Then belike (replyed the excellent Mattarosa) you will not graunt mee to bee the fairest though I end the aduenture: which seeing it is so, I promise you to finde out a knight that shall defend it against all the world. You promise much (replyed the Princesse) for I knew

not what knight will bée so hardie, as to attempt so haughtie an interpryze, vnlesse it bee the knight of the Images, of whom I beleeue you shall obtaine nothing against me. Al this know, I (answered the Infante.) But I haue a knight in these partes, that farre excells him, both in valiantie and faireneſſe. How know you that (said the Princeſſe) for I neuer heard any such thing. Ile tell you (replyed the Infant.) To my Fathers kingdome there came a messenger, that brought a letter from the Sophy, father vnto the Prince Perianeo, requiring his ayde, to bée reuenged of a subiect of his, that with the helpe of a knight, called of the golden Image, had slayne his Sonne in law, the Prince Don Gallaneo, and had stolne his daughter Perſiana, and recounted such wonders of this knight, and of his rare beautie, which hardlie we beléeue, but that wée were informed thereof by other meanes. And this knight will I haue to defend my beautie, which notwithstanding, I feare he will not, for I haue heard he beareth your picture grauen on his shield. I am stroke into a great amazement (aunswered the Princeſſe) with your diſcourſe, and cannot comprehend that any knight in the world, would bée so madde, to presume to beautifie his armour with my portrature. And I assure you, if he heere arriueth, he shall do much to saue his head, in recompence of his presumption. Trouble not your selfe with any such thought (said the Infant) for you would much more greeue, if you should sée all this place full of vanquisht knights in my behalfe. In this manner chatted these two Mirors of rare beautie, till they approached the rich tent, where there senses were rauished with the rare melodious Musicke that thence sounded: and parting handes, the beauteous Mattarosa entred the tent, where one of those knightes toke her by the hand, and brought her to the steppes: whereon the infant courteously began to mount. All the beholders iudged the aduenture ended: which not a little greeued the Princeſſe, because she had not first tryed it. But she had not ascended the third steppe, when she felt her selfe stayed, and striuing to go vppe, she suddenly found her selfe without the Tent, to her greate

greefe, because she had not ended the aduenture. The Princesse heereat laughing, said. I knowe not (faire Cousen why you sought a sword, seeing you must not vse any combatting with me. I knowe not what to answere (said the pleasant Infant but that no trust is to bee reposed in these inchauntments, beeing onely made according to their Authors minde: yet trye you it, that we may see your merits, for it may be, your companie would lessen my greefe. The Princesse going to trie the aduenture, shee sawe entred by the farther side of the field, a Knight in a greene Armour, very rich, with many golden Basiliskes thereon, whose gallant disposition more contented her, then any she euer sawe. In his shield was drawne her picture so naturall, that it seemed aliue: by his side did ride an auncient Ladie maskt, bringing in her hands a naked sword, so bright, that it lok like a transparant glasse of fine Christall, set against the Sunne: which she seeing, stayed herselfe. The Knight and the Ladie went straight to the tent. But Fristone seeing them at first enter in the field, began to make his conjurations, not knowing who they were, nor to what end they came, nor neuer could knowe it, because Don Bellianis had on the Emperour Broudezars armour: and the sage Bellona, which was she that came with him, carryed the same Emperours sword: yet hee straight knewe the effect of their comming, and beleeuing to haue no let in his intent, transformed himselfe into a most monstreus and vglie Grifion, and went straight to the Princesse, and taking her by her armes, would haue gone away with her.

But the Knight of the Basiliskes arriued so suddainely, that hee had no time to do it, and with his sword stryking at him, cutte all his feathers, and wounded him on his shoulder, and the good sword not onely wrought this, but also made the Sage Fristone, for to returne to his naturall forme, falling presently on the ground, bleeding apace: Whom the inchaunted Knightes straight toke and conuayed within the Tent.

Don

Don Bellianis ſtepping to the Princeſſe, ſaid. Faint not, Vſurpreſſe of anothers heart, but animate your ſelfe, till you be freed from him that ſo great harme would haue done you. The Princeſſe did ſo, with ſuch amazement by the feare, that ſhee knewe not in what world ſhe was. The like happened the infant Mattaroſo. But Don Bellianis being aduertiſed of Bellona what hee ſhould do, ſtepped to the Tent, where hee was aſſaulted by the foure inchauntred Knightes, with ſuch hardineſſe, that they put him in great extremitie, for though by vertue of his ſword, their inchauntment preuayled not againſt him, yet were they very valiant and couragious. But the Prince ſeeing himſelfe before his Lady, and conſidering that to bee the firſt battell in her ſeruice, ſo handled his aduerſaries, cutting armour, fleſh and all, himſelfe ſuſtaining great labour, and the loſſe of blood. The Princeſſe trembled for very feare, thinking ſhe ſhould bee put in like danger againe. The infant Mattaroſa that was more hardie, ſaid. What thinke you (faire Couſen) of yonder knight? Surely I thinke it is he that I tolde you of, for by the deuiſe of his ſhield, and the report of him, I doe not doubt it. We ſhall now know it (replyed the Princeſſe:) But let vs intreate our Gods to free him from the daunger he is in for our ſakes. And therewith looked to the fight, wherein the knight had brought his aduerſaries to ſuch a paſſe, that they had almoſt fallen, whereuppon their iſſued forth of the Tent two mightie Gyants, that aſſaulted the Prince, giuing him ſuch blowes, that they made his head kiſſe the ſaddle pummell. But he with double force (increaſed with his rage) ſo behaued him with them, that hee threwe two of the knights dead to the ground. And ſeeing the battell ſo long indured, reſolued to enter within the tent in diſpight of them, knowing that if he did it, the fight would ceaſe, & the inchauntment end.

The Knights and Gyants perceiuing it, layde faſte holde on him, but he being of mightie and vnmatched forces, maugre their power went in with them, and with his ſword hee gaue ſo hard a blowe vpon the ſteppes, that hee mad a darke

ſmoake

smoake, like a thicke mist, ascend vpwards, which so blinded the beholders eyes, that they saw not one an other. But by meanes of the Sage Bellona, it vanished, remaining no memory of Tent nor aduenture, saue the two dead knights that lay on the earth. Who were able to set down the amazed admiration that euery one conceiued, seeing those so straunge things, and they were in such case as if that had bene the fearefull day of doome: specially the Soldan seeing all that had happened, who went to speake vnto the knight that was already mounted on his horse.

CHAP. XLIII.

What the Knight of the Basiliskes past, with the Souldane of Babylon, after the battell, and with the Princesse Florisbellaes departing vnknowne, promising speedily to return and and serue her.

THe Prince Don Bellianis, seeing the aduenture ended, according to his desire, mounted a horseback to depart, for so Bellona would haue him do, but perceiuing the Souldane comming towards him, he thought it discurtesie to part without speaking, staid, and seeing he was come nigh him, setting his hand on his saddle, alighted with admirable lightnesse, and prostrating himselfe, demanded his hands to kisse them. The Soldan, against all intreaties, did also dismount, shewing the like curtesie that the knight did, for he was a prince absolute in all Courtly behauiour) had not Don Bellianis staied, to whom the Souldan thus saide. I cannot comprehend the cause excellent knight) that hauing brought to end the greatest and no lesse strange aduenture hitherto seene, liberating vs from such daunger, you should depart, bereauing vs of your desired conuersatiõ by so sodain departure from our court, which I would vnwillingly haue you do, though you were newly put in as great daunger as the last you vndertooke in our behalfes (which notwithstanding the Gods defend. And farther I say, if at my request you deny to do it, withstanding my authoritie, you shal be conuicted by her, for whose remedie, our immortall Gods, I thinke brought you hither. Where he imbraced him with loue, as

the benefit receiued bound him to. Don Bellianis was stroke into such an amaze, that he knew not how to be resolued, thinking if he did not obey the Soudan, the vnkindnesse would be greater, then the seruice he had done him. And on the other side he considered, that he might incurre no lesse daunger by discouering himself, not knowing Bellonaes intent, in so concealing him. But to salue all, the best he might, made this reply. It doth not a litle greeue me (most mightie Lord) that I cannot do you the seruice my heart desires, because it lyeth not in my power, being hither brought by yonder Lady that you see, without whose leaue I may dispose of nothing: but binding my dutie to your seruice for euer, as the person that most honour on the earth deserueth. While they were thus talking, the Sage Bellona came to them, and with her the two sole excellencies of beautie, the Princesses Florisbella, and Matarosa, with such rare brightnesse (that it would obscure the midday Sun in all his pride, shining in the middle heauen where he dwelles. The aboue all fairest, the faire Princesse Florisbella, sole diuine perfection of an earthly object, came with such a gallant semblance, that no humane heart could haue bene so obdurate, but would haue melted at her sight: she was cladde in a white sattin gowne, with a petticoate of the same, all cut vppon most rich cloth of Golde, and euery cut tacked with a great Orient Pearle, which were so many and so well set, that they made so straunge a worke, that the curiousnesse thereof could not be discerned, the sleeues were long and large, hanging to the ground, closed with wyer of massiue gold, set with the same Pearles, and lyned with the same cloth of golde, hung out with many vnualuable Iewels, her Amber haire disheuelled ouer her shoulders, hung backwards gathered togither behinde her eares, vppon which shee had a Coronet garnished with Dyamonds, Rubies, Saffyres and pearles, of more worth then that whole Cittie before, on her Carkanet pended a Carbuncle as bigge as two Walnuttes, that yelded so much light as foure great Torches burning in the darke. Her Gorget was so open, that plainly might be discerned the rare excellency of the Creator of all thinges, in the pure wonder of the Sunne-out clearing whitenesse of her brest, adorned with inestimable

mable Gemmes. And although she thus came attired, more beautie did glorifie her garments, from the diuine naturall of her face, then was hir beautie graced by the brightnesse of those stones, such sole supremacie did make her absolute, for no artificiall woorke could diminish nor augment her fauour. The stately passage of her feete, no more seemed to moue, then the gentle blast of the milde blowing winde. The Princesse Matarosa was attired in that maner, whose perfection had no equall, in the absence of her faire Cosin. In this maner arriued they, where the Souldan was talking with the Princesse don Bellianis, who seeing the excellency of his Lady, that farre excelled the portrayture of his shield, rested so confounded with admiration, that his braue heart vnable to resist so fierce an assault, all couered with a cold sweat, as if that were the last moment of his life, lost his sences, that had not the Souldane (who thought some mortall wounde had caused it) held him fast about the necke, he had fallen to the ground: yet notwithstanding he was in such a traunce, that he felt nothing that was done vnto him. Whereat the Princesse Florisbella being verie sorrowfull, stepped to him to vnlace his helme. But the Sage Bellona quickly running thither, cryed out she should not do it: and imbracing the Prince, said that euery one heard. What is the matter knight) that in time that we most neede your helpe, you shewe such weaknesse? The Prince at her words, recouered himselfe, and greatly ashamed at the accident, replied. You know (deare Lady) that I came no otherwise, seeing the hand of cruell death knocked at my heart, vnlesse I be succoured with present remedie. Our immortall Gods will not permit it (Sir knight, said Florisbella) that we hauing receiued so absolute remedie by the helpe of your valiourous arme, your life should be bereft you, to depart vngratified for your deare merits. Whereto he answered.

In all humble dutie, lower then lowly earth, I kisse your beauteous handes, (sole excellent Princesse,) for the vndeserued fauour of your words, whose power hath only power to cure my decaying life, dispairing of all remedie and deare comfort in the whole vniuerse, but by this.

While they were thus talking, the Soldan knew Bellona, whom with great ioy he imbraced, she would haue kissed his and the Empresse hands, but the Soldan wold not suffer it, saying. Why haue your (deare friend) kept your selfe away so long time, not visiting her? for I know no cause you had for it, but now shal you pay for al, not departing so easily as you thinke. And I pray you tell, who is this valorous knight ỹ comes with you? for I am sure, you knew of our distresse, seeing you came in so great time of need. The wise woman made this reply. You say true (dread Lord) for knowing your danger, and that surely you had lost the princesse your daughter, I vndertoke this iourny, imposing so great a danger vpon this knight, as he vnderwent by our comming. And beleeue me, his equall liues not this day in the world, and without him, my comming had bene in vaine: and hitherto I did not visit you, because you had no need of me. I beleeue it (replied the Souldane) and now that our ioy may be compleat, I pray you make this knight vnlace his helme, and remaine here some fewe dayes, for it would greatly ver me, if such a knight shuld go from my Court vnknowne. This must be pardoned (said she) for he must depart vnknown: and therfore I pray you do not importune him about it, for it cannot be otherwise. Hereupon they went where the two Princesses Florisbella & Matarosa were chatting with Don Bellianis, intreating him to put off his helme. Wherupon the Souldan said. If you obtain no more then hitherto you haue done of this knight, I beleeue he will depart vnknowne. He will not so much wrong vs, (said the Princesse vnlesse he will haue vs make litle account of his ayd we receiued. And seeing he saith he will do what this Lady doth commaund him, I hope she will not leaue vs so vnsatisfied, in recompence of her long absence. I do beseech your excellency (said Bellona) not to vere your selfe: for I assure you, if he now discouer himselfe, it will cost him no lesse then his life, in lieu of the pleasure he should do you therein. And let this suffise, which according to our power we haue done. But yet in respect of this displeasure, I do certifie you, that your cousin the Princesse Aurora is wel (though sorowfull, wanting your company,) she we left in Persia, with the Ladies you sent to seeke her, and thither must we goe shortly.

This

This hath greatly comforted me (said she) yet rest not altogither satisfied, wanting the effect of this my desire. I cannot expresse the oppression of my greeued heart (most excellent and supreme Lady) said Don Bellianis, to haue so yoked the libertie of my condition to a straunger power, that I cannot now, though it were with the certaine daunger of my life, satisfie the deare obedience of your high commaund: for I haue so tyed my selfe to anothers will, that I must not do more then what this Lady here shall appoint me. But I do protest and promise you, by our high immortall Gods, (hauing freed my libertie,) to returne with all speede to serue you, and the Souldan your father, whence I will not part, but by your commaund: in token whereof, I do beseech you accept this Ring, which cost me no litle labour, with abundant losse of my blood, to obtaine it. Wherewith you shall be safe and sure of any such accident as this last. And taking off his Gaunlets, discouered the Alablaster whitenesse of his hands. The Princesse heart was somewhat abashed, adding more beautie, to her beautie, by the roseat tincture of a vermillion blush, not knowing whether she should take the Ring which the knight presented her, thinking shee should thereby do him a greater fauour then she would. Which the Infant Matarosa perceiuing, being greatly satisfied with the knights behauiour, said vnto her. What doth your highnesse doubt: why do you not accept the precious gift of this valourous knight: wold you see vs euery day in like daunger: which if you desire, I assure you we shall not euery day haue so good helpe: for though I sustained some perill, yet was there none that succoured me. Receiue this gift (daughter) said the Souldane, for it is no small thing to keepe the pledge of so valiant a knight. All this while the discreete Princesse, holding downe her eyes, gazed on don Bellianis hand, thinking with her selfe, that if his face, with the disposition of his bodie, did agree with it, the whole world could not affoord a gallanter nor better knight, of whose valour, she was sufficient witnesse. And seeing her Image on his shield, imagined this was the knight whose praises her cousin had so inhoused. Whereupon the subtill God of Loue, on a suddain, take his tributary duties, by the possession of her heart, and with such a violent stroake, penetrated it,

that hauing no defensiue prowe, nor the shielde of reason to withstand it, but vnprouided, assaulted by his subtiltie, yeelded at the first encounter, resting so vanquished, that she neuer had the power to recouer the former libertie of her heart. And the more shee thought on him, the more she did insnare her selfe, as the discourse of this present booke mentioneth, for no small torments this vnseen sight of don Bellianis Cousin here, and with a suddaine ioy conceiued by her thoughts, dying her beautie to make it more faire, with the colour of an Orient Ruby. First, thinking that her Fathers commaund, and her Cousins perswasions, were sufficient armour to shield her from after scandall: with lowly courtesie on both parts, she tooke the King, saying. I do receiue (Sir Knight,) this present at your hands, lest it be saide, I do deny the gratefulnesse I owe, for the good turne you did, and taking possession of this which is the least, you shall remaine bounde to that which is the most, I meane your speedie returne, to attend the Souldane my dread Soueraigne: and because you shall not forget it, I will keepe this as a pledge, left me, by you, as also in remembrance of her, that against my will doth lead you away, before you haue receiued any signe of guerdon of my father. Yet before you goe, I pray you let vs know the daungerous deceit we had like to fall in. I do most humbly beseech you, (sole president of diuine excellency) said (Don Bellianis) to let me kisse the wonder of your handes, that I may thereby enioy the fruition of so high a fauour as you haue done, in the acceptance of the small gift of so meane a Knight as I am, in respect of your highnesse. Againe, promising my returne shall be so shortly, as the obedience of your commaund requireth, vnlesse my hopes be frustrated by death: and turning to Bellona, intreated her, seeing she knew the beginning and end of that aduenture, she wold fully satisfie the Princesse therin. Which she did, in manner alreadie set downe. And hauing done, craued leaue to depart. And so kissing the Souldans hands, and the Empresse Siluiana bad them and the Princesses farewell.

Don Bellianis did the like, with such griefe (as any in his case may imagine) leauing his heart with the Princesse, and for it, carrying away hers. The Princesse Matarea pleasantly said thus

vnto

the Prince. I do beleeue sir Knight, that the Sage Bellona hath so mastered you, that you speake not but when it pleaseth her, and if it be so, tell it me? for I presume to obtaine leaue of her, for your tongue to play. Don Bellianis, that through his great amazement had not seene her, but seeing her, replied. This hath not bene the cause of my silent ouersight, courteous and pleasant Lady but the imaginations of the sight there seene, which with my suddaine departure hath so increased my admiration, and so intrapt me in my owne thoughts, that they haue suffered me not to regard the deserued merits of your worthie person, robbing the power of my speech, to confound me more in the deep consideration of my harts subiection. Then belike the fault is very litle (answered she) by the speedie redressing of our daunger, wearing so good an armour as that. The present blindnesse (deare Lady said he) is better to preserue my future sight. At your returne, you shall explaine me this (said she) for now I do not vnderstand it. Whereupon the braue Prince don Bellianis mounted a horsbacke, not setting his foote in the stirrope, as was his custome, and very gallantly managing him, he made him bende his knees vnto the earth: and bending downe his owne head in signe of his dutie, departed in maner as he came, with vnspeakable ioy, to haue so happily finished that aduenture before his Lady, to his immortall glorie, which were it not tempered with griefe of his departure, it had bene inough to kill him. But here we leaue him, till farther accidents shall refresh his remembrance.

CHAP

CHAP. XLIIII.

What the Princesse Florisbella did, after the Knight of the golden Image was departed. Of her Laments and Conference with the Infant Maturosa, her Cousin.

THe Princesse Florisbella, remained so amazed with the suddaine departure of the new Louer, that so quickly had made a praie of her tender hart, that all her imaginations, were on nought but of Don Bellianis, and till he went cleane out of the field, she accompanied him with her sight, so stedfastly firing her eyes after him, that had not her cousin called her away to follow the Souldane and Empresse that were returning to the Court, there she had staied, forgetfull of her selfe. The Infant Matarosa, said vnto her by the way: What say you (faire Cousin) to that great knight? did you euer see in all your life a man of more valor? And trust me, I thinke it be he I told you of, a litle before his comming. I greatly desire to see the fairnesse of his complexion, whether it accorded with the constitution of his bodie, and gallant behauiour. I know not what I should say (replied the Princesse) for he hath not seemed so well in my eyes, and though his valour haue freed me from the daunger you sawe, great is his presumption notwithstanding, to beare my picture with him about the world, and his discurtesie is no lesse, to depart vnknowne vnto the Souldan my father, and nothing respecting our intreaties, leauing mee so discontented, and I had not taken his ring, had not my father cõmanded, and you perswaded me vnto it. You haue no reason to blame him for it (said her Cousin) for he could do no otherwise, being bound vnto the contrarie by the sage Bellona, and I know not what Princesse or greater Lady woulde haue refused so deare a seruice as this knight offered you so liberally, which you seemed to accept most vnwillingly. Speake not of it (answered the princesse, for I had like to haue shewed my selfe as vnthankefull, in taking it as he discourteous in not doing what I intreated him. But if returne hee shall knowe the discontent hee did me. Assure you said her pleasant Cousin, if he would be my knight, I would not hammer on these doubts.

If he returnes, hee shall be (answered the Princesse.) I will yeilde vnto it (saide the Infant) if you obtaine it without such ceremonie as you make. It may bee I shall at his returne (the Princesse made answere) and therefore rest contented. I perceiued no such intent in him (replied the Infant.) In such like discourse went they with the Soldane, and Empresse, till they arryued to the Pallace, where the Princesse, saying shee felt her selfe distempered, left her Cousen, and her Ladyes, withdrawing alone vnto her Chamber, to consider at more leysure of him that had so displeased her. And shutting the doore after her, with a perdue heart vnable to resist her passions, shee cast her selfe vppon her bedde, and with teares trickling downe her Cheekes, with sighes that interrupted the cleare passage of the speech, shee sayde with a soft voyce. Oh vnhappie Princesse Florisbella, what vnluckie houre was that wherein thou diddest goe to see that cursed aduenture? that hath beene the cause of these thy torments and anguishe of heart, making thee hereafter bondslaue to griefe, and in the ende gaine thy freedome by death. Ah, deceytfull Ladies, fatall was the moment wherein I graunted you the boone you craued, to gaine yee my good will, so manie paynes. Oh sage Bellona, if from one daunger you haue liberated mee in a greater, you haue intrapped mee. And I doo beseech the Goddes, to terminate these woes with my vntimelie death. For what auayles it mee to bee commaundresse ouer so manie Kings, Princes, Lordes, and Signiories, if the fatall destinies of my vnhappie chaunce haue, tied the libertie of my heart vnto a Knight vnknowne, of whom I sawe, but armour and his horse, neither knowe I what hee is, denying to discouer his face. Oh immortall Goddes, if this you haue ordered in the heauenly Synode of your decrees, why did you not also summon mee to appeare before your celestiall Thrones, to heare your cruell sentence giuen against mee? But what say I, disgraced that I am? For it may bee, that Knight is one of our Goddes? For who coulde else haue had the power to do what he did in such a short time? And so inthrall the quiet peace of my heart. Oh Prince, howe haue the Goddes reuenged thee, because I neuer

regarded thy high merits, punishing my contempt by that knight that would not shew me his face, whom peraduenture you may be he, that would not disclose your selfe, being displeased by my father? But aye me than art not he, for thy wordes neuer so penetrated me be art, nor the Lyre Bellona, (they great charme by reason her Cousen the Princesse Aurora) had not brought thee in her company. But aye me, distressed soule, bee it as it will, endure I must languish in perpetuall torments, and in the ende, hope for no remedy of same.

Whyle the Princesse thus complained, her Cousen Matarosa, that by her fayned withdrawing, did suspect what it might bee, that came through a secret dore where she was, and staid to ouerheare her, but could vnderstand nothing what she said, and greatly wondring at this nouelte, she went away, and came to her Chamber dore, and knocked, which awaked the Princesse out of her lament, who drying her eyes, ordering her selfe the best she could, opened the dore and let her in. But her Cousen seing her in that case, dissembled what she thought, and said. How now Cousen doth the feare of the last aduenture last so long that it so troubles you? Or is it because you did no more good therein than I? Or is it the discontent you conceiued of the discourteous knight? If the last, tell me it, and wee will procure him to redresse the wrong? The Princesse couering her face, with a blush, like the mourning Duane rising in the East, answered. Do not put me in more danger than there was the last, (deare Cousen) for you make me thinke you knowe that Knight, making me imagine, that by your meanes I am snared in the deceyte of yonder inchauntment. In this manner past these Ladies many dayes, discoursing on nothing but the deeds of the knight of the Basiliske for so they called him, by reason of the armour hee did weare, and the Princesse Florisbella euerie day with longing desire, expecting his returne, still continued in her vsuall laments, wherein her Cousen one day taking her, would needes knowe the cause of them, which shee, by great importunitie declared, which was no small comfort to her after woes. But here wee leaue them till their time, with the Soldane, greatly doubting whether

ther this was the Prince of Persia, which hee confirmed to bee, because he would not discouer himselfe. But his Lords perswaded him to the contrarie, saying. This Knight better became his armour then he. But now the storie turnes vnto the Prince don Brianell, whom we left in his iourney towards Antioch.

CHAP. XLV.

What don Brianell did after hee was gone from Bollera, and how he was informed of the state of Antioch.

WIth great desire to procure the good successe of his Ladies commaund, departed don Brianell to Antioche, thinking that to effect so waighty a matter as that his foundation was weake. But continuing his voyage, meeting with no aduenture worthie the rehearsall, at length arriued at a Citie not aboue twelue miles from Antioch, called Miriana, where hee resolued to stay, and learne the state of the kingdome. And alighting at a house of good credit, was verie well intertained by the owner of the house, that was one of the best Knights in that Countrey. So supper ended, discoursing alone with him of diuerse matters, he demaunded who was King of that Countrey, being then troubled with ciuill mutinies? The host with teares in his eyes, thus answered. You shall knowe sir Knight that after the King Pomperano, our soueraigne was slaine, by the men of the Persian Soldan, a kinsman of his, called Don Gallaneo, became our King, who gouerned vs in peace, maintaining law and iustice with all vprightnesse. But since, we haue vnderstood he was slaine at Persepolis, by some of the late Soldans subiects, and in whose absence there gouerned vs as Viceroy, a noble man named Damastyno, who with great wisdom and discretion, kept vs in quiet concord, till a brother of the King of Phrigia, by name the fearefull Tremolcano knowing him reuenge of the death of don Gallaneo of Antioch, the king of Cyrus with two more brethren of his, were slaine in Persia, calling vs traitors and rebels, with a great power came vpon vs, & subuerting the Countrey, Gaiano which is a great

Lord in his Countrey, take our Gouernor, saying he would haue rebelled with the land, and hath imprisoned him in a castell, taking possession of the whole kingdome, saying. Don Gallaneo hath no nigher allie then he, and so executeth daily such tyrannies on the afflicted people, that we desire rather to die, then liue. This is sir, the truth of your demaund. But tell me (sayde Don Brianell) left your King Pompeiano no issue to inherite his kingdome after him? He did (replied his hoast) one daughter called the Princesse Aurora, whome we thinke to bee dead: for wee haue neuer since heard of her. But if she be not dead (sayde Don Brianell) and comming hither, will you not receyue her? We will all die in her behalfe, (replyed hee.) But these traytour are so stronglie fortified, that wee shoulde hardly effect anie good, vnlesse there were some to incourage the people of the Countrey, and for this none better then the Gouerneur Damarteyno, but that his imprisonment forbiddes it for euer. Is his guard so great (sayd Don Brianell) that you thinke he may not be liberated? The guarde (replied he) is not so great, but that the Cittie is so nigh vnto the Castell, that vpon the giuing of the watch-worde, aboue thirtie thousand men would arme themselues. And within the Castell, there is a Mine that reacheth vnto the King Tramolcano's Pallace. How know you this, (said don Brianell?) Because you seeme a man on whom I may repose greater trust, I will tell you (answered the hoast) I was Lieutenant of the castell, vnder Damarteyno three yeares, and then knew I it, and that way went I often to speake with him, which makes me the more pittie his imprisonment. Don Brionell liked well of his hoasts wordes, and perceiuing hee wished well to the affayres of the Princesse Aurora sayde. Can you tell mee howe I might get vnto that Mine to go into the Castell? I do (replied hee) but what dooth it concerne you, that you will vndertake so daungerous an enterprise. I am his nigh Allie (sayde don Brianell) and woulde willinglie put my selfe in hazarde to set him at libertie. Although it seemes impossible to scape with life, in this enterprize (sayde the hoast) because there is within, a Cousen of the Giantes, with tenne Knightes, I will notwithstanding doe it, and helpe

herein

herein while I liue: and therefore will goe with you to Borrowe to Antioche, being an honour to loose my life in companie of such a knight. Don Brianell thanked him for it, promising that if their enterprize had a good successe, his paynes shoulde bee well quitted. The deedes doo bring with them theyr recompence (sayde the hoast) and more then this, am I bounde to doo for Damartyno. The nert morning, saying that hee must goe about certaine affayres to Antioche, clad himselfe all in Armour. For though he were poore, yet was hee one of the valiantest knights of that Countrey, all his life trained vp in chiualorous designes. Which don Brianell seeing, wondered at it, not knowing hee was a knight, and so departed towards Antioch.

CHAP. XLVI.

What don Brianell, and Palineo of the venture did, arriuing at Antioch, and the daunger they were in.

WIth intention aforesaid, trauailed these two knights, till they came within sight of the cities of Antioch, which was one of the best, and well peopled Citie of the world, for there was within, aboue a hundred thousand great housholds. Don Brianell highly admyred the Turrets and Towers of the same, which were numberlesse, and the Sunne reuerberating on them, made the Citie seeme of a burning flame. What thinke you (sir) of this noble Citie, demaunded the hoast? Well, replied don Brianell, for I haue not seene a more fayrer, and that better contented me. Not without reason doo you say so, sayde his hoast) for I assure you, there is but three fayrer at this present, which are Babylon, Memphis, and Constantinople, which notwithstanding scant in fayrenesse equals this. I pray you tell me your name said don Brianell) for I greatly desire to knowit, seeing we shall be better acquainted hereafter. My name is (sayde he) Palineo of the Venture: and seeing this occasion requires it, I woulde gladlie knowe yours before wee come to Antioche. I am called the aduenturous knight (answered don Brianell)

and do beleeue you neuer heard me named, hauing neuer trauelled this way before. I haue no doubt of it sir, replied Palmeo, but you must now chaunge that name here, for it is said a knight so called, was present at the king of Cyprus death. Thus went they till they met a knight sore wounded, going in great haste. Don Brianell staying him, demaunded the cause of his hastie iourney in that manner? You shall know, sir, replied the knight, that the Countie Gariano, to exercise his knights order yesterday, a tourney of a thousande on each side, so many of his, against the like number of the fierce king Tramolcanos: which on either part this day was begunne verie bloodie: but in the meane time, entring there in, two of the kings cousens, haue made such a massacre of the Counties knights, that none dare confront them, and my selfe being wounded, as you see, am thus going to be cured, in a Castell not far from hence, and so past away. What were we best to do, sir Palmeo, demaunded don Brianell? That we go to the iousts (answered he) and there we shall see what we haue to do. And thus resolued, arriued at the Tilt-yard, where but 500. of the counties knights were left, and they so wounded, that they could no longer withstand their aduersaries, by reason of the cruell strokes of the kings causes. Which don Brianell perceiuing, and his valiant heart abhorring to be role, saide to Palmeo, Let vs succour these almost vanquished. Be it so replied he. Whereupon recwching their Launces, entred the listes, and at the first encounters, ouerthrew two of the Giants knights: and don Brianell before his Launce broke, vnhorsed more then five. Palmeo with a loude voyce cried out thus. Courage, courage, knights of Antioch, and shew the valour of your mindes, least now you bee reputed vanquished, which neuer hitherto hath happened. Who emboldened with this speech, seeing the haughtie deedes of don Brianell, courageously renued the bloodie skirmish.

The two Giants seeing that nouelti in the Cities knights, and how the Prince don Brianell, like a bloodie Dragon persecuted their men, did both together assaile him, to giue him his death. But he that in greater perils had beene in, awaited them courageously, well couered with his shield, and they arriuing both at

at one time with their flying semblers, discharged two mightie blowes vpon him. But don Bryanell spurred his horse forward, within them, that the blowes lighted not full on him, notwithstanding his sheelde was cleft cleane in two, and he wounded one with a mightie thrust, that the sword appeared at his backe, falling dead on the ground. And seeing an other furious blowe from the other gyant descend vppon his head, and being destitute of a sheeld, cleft the smiter with his sword, which beeing of a better temper then the Gyants, it cut it in two, and straight thereupon stroke the Giant on his arme, which from his shoulder fell to the earth. Who seeing himselfe maimed of his limbs, turned his horse, and roaring fled away. Who were able to expresse the greefe and rage of Tramolcano, to see one Cousin slaine, and the other wounded to death? Thereupon calling out to his men to take that knight, that had committed so great treason: whereat, many incompassed Don Bryanell: wherefore Palmeo went to help him, amazed at his haughty deedes.

The count Gariano's men brauely defended him, yet had hee remained prisoner, (for the diuelish Tramolcano descended with all his men had not Palmeo that foresawe the daunger, pluckt him by the arme, and said to him. Follow me sir knight, if you wil saue your life, for it will be reputed no lesse valour to saue it thus, then staying to kill all this company. Don Bryanell allowing his counsaile, rained his horse backwards, & went away in despight of all that looked after him. So soone as the king was come downe frõ his window, the tourney was parted, and he commanded of these and other knights aboue 4000. to follow the murtherers as hee called them, of his Cousins, and dead or aliue they should bring thẽ to him, and he taking with him, the dead bodies of his slaine Cousins, returned to his pallace, to arme himselfe, minding in person to follow the search: all which, was but in vaine, for Palmeo knowing all those wayes, nookes and lanes, that was thereabout, issued out of the Cittie, in sight of all the knights, spurring without lingring, till they came into a litle Groaue, & turning on the right hand, entred into a garden, vnseene of any, and passed to the farther side thereof, vnto a house, where shepheards in stormy weather with-

withdrew themselues, and there staying, don Brianell, said, seeing they were not seene of anie, Let vs light here, if you please, that our horses may rest, and from hence, may we well see if any followes vs. Whereupon loking from the high Mountaine, and espying none, dismounted from their horses, and put them in a stable that there was, giuing them hay, and prouender, they there found. And with great ioy of their good successe, discoursed of their late aduenture, greatly pleased with the death of these two giants, who Palineo sayd, did great outrages in that land. I hope said don Brianell we shall easily enter the castell. Hardly shall we do it (replied Palineo) yet we will trie it, seeing we are come to that effect. In the meane time, were it good we had somewhat to supper. That were not amisse (replied don Brianell) if our prouision were better. Let me alone for that (said Palineo) so soone as it is night, for I also greatly desire to see what is done in the Pallace, the better to order our affayres. And thereupon expected the approach of the couerer of nightly actions.

CHAP. XLVII.

What don Brianell and Palineo did, going out of the Cittie of Antioch, how they entred the Mine, and of their fight with the Castell, about the libertie of Damartyno.

THe darke night being come, so obscure as they wished, Palineo vnarmed himselfe, and leauing don Brianell behinde, put on a cloake he found in the house, which the day before a shepheard had there left, and muffling his face, went to the Citie, where, taken for a shepheard, he passed vnknowne, till he came to the Kings Pallace, where he found many armed knights that returned from the search, among whom was the King himselfe, mad with anger, that hee could not heare of the two knights that slue his Cousens. Among this troupe, had Palineo occasion to go in, and so went vnto the Hynes mouth, whose doore was shut, and feeling whether it might bee opened, hee found the Locke verie weake, for the doore vsed onelie to bee shutte, because that secret might not bee discouered.

And

And so returned to the Citie, and brought some victualles for himselfe and his companion, wherewith, being almost tenne a clocke, he came to Don Bryanell, where with a good stomacke they supt, having eaten nothing since their comming from Miriana, and having done, Palineo said. Let vs be gone, for if longer wee staye, the King and the Countie may haue supt, and so wee bee lockt out of the Pallace. But what shall we do with our horses? (said Don Bryanell) for I would not willinglie lose mine, because this Cittie containes none so good. If (replyed Palineo) wee dye in this enterprize, wee shall not neede our Horses: but if wee scape, liberating according to our desire, our friend Damartyno, the matter will be lesse, in losing them. Don Bryanell replying neuer a word, armed himselfe, and carrying his Helme in his hand, put on the shepheards cloake, which Palineo had before worne, who said vnto him: You passe me, in disguising your selfe, incurring no lesse daunger, then I doe: for if with the many lightes I be knowen by mine armor, in the Pallace, you are like to suffer w me. But what shal wee do (said don Bryanell?) There can we do no otherwise (replyed he) but in the cittie we way better shift. And being come thither, by the way they met two or three Pages, Palineo stepped to one, and taking him by the cloake, made as hee would drawe his sword, the Page feared therewith, left it him, and got away, crying out, they would murther him. But Palineo calling don Bryanell, crosse another way, because he would not be seene. Don Bryanell could not stand for laughter, to see what deuise Palineo had found to get the others cloacke. What say you to this? saide Palineo:) hee that hath nothing, must shift to get it with little labour. Nowe so the Gods helpe mee (said Don Bryanell) it was well done, and the quickneese you performed it with, makes me thinke you haue not a seawe times vsed it. You say true (answered Palineo) for some time through necessitie, I haue helped my selfe with like deuises, which is nothing: for in neede, this cloake was as well mine, as his that woare it, and perchaunce more so.

In this manner arriued they at lasse in the Pallace (after the clocke had strooke twelue) where the King was yet at Supper,

and meeting with the Captaine of the kings guard, thinking they belonged to the Countie, demaunded whence at that time they came. They replyed, we came from seeking those knightes, the King our Soueraigne commaunded to be brought vnto him, and not finding them, we returned to vnarme our selues. So they paste, till they came to the Mine, and seeing none was by, opened the locke, and went in, and chayning the doore faste on the inside with lockes and chaines, they found there, and feeling with their hands, went along: And by the way Palineo said. It behoues vs to consider how we shall behaue our selues, and though you excell in valour, all those that weare armour, yet in the end is it not amisse, to auoyde all daunger: therefore let vs goe softly, for it may be, we shall free Damarty no without blowe of sword, or Lance. I would we were alreadie within, (said don Bryanell) and as for the rest, it would not be much, we should so doe, through your good policie. At length they came to the doore on the farther side, that went into the Castle: which passing, Palineo shutte fast, that none might that way discrie thē, and giuing one another a watch-word, to knowe themselues in any daunger befalling them, groping with their hands, they came to the place wher Palineo knew the prison was, which they found sure locked, which greeued don Bryanell, thinking they should not doe as they would. But Palineo said. Courage (sir knight) and we wil finde meanes to open this doore. And if not replied don Bryanell) our swordes shall breake it open You say well (aunswered Palineo) and therefore let vs softlie go to the Castle Gate, and that none heare vs, make it sure, that neither by the one, nor by the other, if we preuaile, any may beare the newes: and so going thither, Palineo take a handfull of earth and cast in the lockes, through the keye holes, that it was impossible without breaking, to open them.

I haue learned more of you said don Bryanell in one day, then euer my Tutors taught me in twinne yeares. It might be (answered Palineo) they were neuer in such daungers as I, and therefore could they not teach you, that which by experience is learned. By this time were they heard by one of the seruants of the Castle, who perceiuing they were not of the Court of guard, ranne to the

Cyants

Gyants lodging, crying out, that strangers were within, which cries made the Gyant amazed, leappe out of his bedde, and arme himselfe, whyle the man cryed about, arme, arme, the Castle is surprised. Whereuppon, aboue tenne Knightes that were within were feared out of their beddes. Which the two knights seeing, Palineo said. Followe me knight, before these unite themselues. Yet for all their haste, their appeared many burning torches, at whose light, they sawe the fearefull Gyant comming, with a mightie Mace in his handes. Another way came there fiue Knights alreadie armed.

Don Bryanell required Palineo to assault the Knights, while he withstode the Gyant, who if he had thought them to bee but two alone, had not armed him: and raysing his heauie Mace, would haue discharged it vppon his aduersarie, but he stepping aside, made him lose the blowe, and wanting his shield, hoysted aloft his sword, with both handes, and grounded it with mightie force, vpon the Gyants head, whereon he wore a brazen Scull, which being cutte, made him a little wound. The Gyant nothing regarding the blowe, would haue plucked him to him, but don Bryanell seeing death before his eyes if once the Mace toke him full, straight caste himselfe vppon him, and with muchado wrung the Mace out of the Gyants handes, but he toke don Bryanell betwirt his armes, thinking to stifle him, but he with a valiant hart, drewe his dagger, and stabd it to the hilles, twise or thrise in the Gyants breast, who feeling himselfe deadly wounded, let him go, and drewe forth a mightie Courtleare, that hang by his side, and with it stroke at don Bryanell, which he seeing come right to his head, started aside, yet for all that, it cut his helme quite downe on the one side, and descending lower, it parted his armor, wounding him sorely on the side yet not dangerously. Don Bryanell wone blowe stroke at his leg, which the Gyant for haste, hauing not armed, was cleane cut of, making him like a tower fal to the ground: wher roaring like a lyon, within a little while, he gaue his soule to him, that through his euill workes, had long expected it.

Which done, don Bryanell went to helpe Palineo, that was in a fierce combatte, with the Knights of the Castle, which were all there: among whome, hee shewed the braue courage of his

minde, and had slaine already foure, and with the rest (though with daunger) hee behaued himselfe very brauelie, which highly contented Don Bryanell, that looked on, but thinking it no time to be ydle, valiantly assayled the knights, felling two dead at two blowes, and not long after, the rest not able to suffer his mortall blowes, fledde downe towards the Castle Gate, where the Porter trying to open it, to call for helpe, but all his labour was in vaine, which the knightes seing, returned againe to their aduersaries, where quickly they fell breathlesse at their feete, with all the rest of the Foxes, leauing none of the Gyants companie aliue in the Castle

This dispacht, these two braue Warriours searched about the Castle, to see if any were hidde, but finding none, don Bryanell said. We haue done ill, in not sauing one, to doe what we would, and serue vs at our neede. Greeue not hereat (replyed Palineo) for wee haue no such businesse, nor neede more seruice, then I can doe, being not so deepely wounded, that we should require any such helpe.

You saye well (answered don Bryanell) but vnlesse I be deceiued, you are sore wounded, and my selfe am in like case, and before we lose more blood, let vs set Damartyno at libertie. Be it so (replyed Palineo:) and so toke the keyes of the Prison from the Porters side, and opened it, where they found him ouerladen with boultes and Irons, pale, megre, and weake, for want of sustenance, tasting no foode sometime in two, nor three dayes, whom the knights seeing, could not stay the teares in their eyes, knowing him to be one of the loyalest Knights liuing in those dayes. Damartyno seeing those Knightes enter in that manner, said. What would you with mee Knightes? is your Lord now contented to end my life, which would bee no little comforte to my many torments?

Palineo no longer able to conceale himselfe, vnlacing his helme, with great ioy to see him aliue, said thus. You haue no cause to feare vs (most loyall Knight) being now at length set at libertie by the handes of this valiant Knight, to whome you are no lesse bound, then for your life.

And

And by yours (said Don Brianel) for without you, mine had little auailed. Wheruppon taking away his irons, with great gladnesse he imbraced Palineo, saying. I did assure my selfe, my most deare frænd, you would not faile me in my necessitie, for in such times true friends are knowne, more then in prosperitie, and humbling himselfe to Don Brianell, craued to kisse his hands, saing his person: that good dæde required his dutie. Don Brianel shewed him the like courtesie, and taking him vp, saying. That for that little hee had don, he deserued no such thanks, being bound to more thē that for him for her sake, that sent him. Sir knights said Damartyno, I haue certaine seruants in prison some where about this Castle, for I know they were brought in with me, them I pray you let vs frē. so they went to seeke them, and Damartyno greatly wondred to see so great slaughter by two knights.

And after they had found the seruants Don Brianel and Palineo, they were laid in two beds, in the Castle, and were cured by one of Damartynos seruants, that were very skilfull in that science, and there they continued certaine daies, till they were wel, giuing order, that if any came from the king, they should be admitted to them. But Don Bryanell the first day, required one of the seruants secretly to fetch their horses, where they had left them, which so soone as it was darke, was done, that not a little contented Don Bryanel, for he highly prysed his horse, being neuer a better in that whole kingdome, and through the hurly burly in that Cittie, none remembred they within the castle. But after they were through well, Don Bryanell said to Damartyno, and Palineo, being al togither. Hitherto (sir knight) you haue not knowne the occasion of my comming, nor knowne what I am, hauing neuer seene mee before, but to assure you of both, read this letter, from the honourable Princesse Aurora, by which you shall know the beginning and the ende of my trauaile. Damartyno taking it, opened it, and read it, to this effect.

THe disinherited Queene of Antioch, Aurora, Princesse of Miriana, to thee, the most loyalest of all creatures, her louing Knight, Damartyno of the Valley, gouernour of our

Kingdome, by our will, though by a ſtrangers hand, health. I knowe the vnhappie chances, ouerthrowes, and vnfortunate miſaduentures, haue not beene vnknowne to thee, (as the man that hath ſuſtained the like) which haue by the prouiſion of our immortall Gods, befallen the King Pompeiano thy Lord, and my deare Father, as alſo the feared abſence of my perſon, ſo neceſſarie to eſcape the furie of the Prince Perianeo, of Perſia, and Don Gallaneo of Antioch. And now repoſing my confidence on the high eſtate of thy deſcent, in the great loyalty I haue known in thee, & by the loue my father bare thee, (whoſe death partly on ſome of them is reuenged, as this knight will more at large tell thee I hope the like ſhall alſo be ſeene in thy preſence, through thy meanes) and order: eyther by my comming in perſon to theſe, or with an hoaſt of men, ſufficient to regaine our rights: for which cauſe I ſend thee, this valourous knight, excellent not onely in armes, but in al things elſe, required in a noble mā. With him ſhalt thou determine the beſt, and the ſpeedieſt meanes, for theſe affaires we mooue, but the Gods protect thee, and preſerue thee in that ſtate of loialtie, which thou euer glorieſt in.

So ſoone as Damartino had read this letter, did again imbrace Don Brianell, ſaying. I could not haue or deſire better newes, thē theſe (ſir knight) to comfort my afflicted hart, ioying to know of the welfare of my ſoueraygne. But how ſhal we do, for this tyrant and vſurping king Tramoſcano, is ſo mightie and ſtrongly fortified in this land, that we may hardly oppoſe our ſelues againſt his forces: I am of opinion (ſaid Palmeo ſeeing we are to begin ſo great an enterpryſe, we make it knowne vnto the Duke of Siluania, to whom, hauing Don Gallaneo granted all his liuings, the vſurper hath now for ſome cauſes diſcontented, vnto whom I am aſſured ſeeing you at libertie, will not denie all his aid, aſſiſting you, to recouer againe that which he hath loſt, or elſe loſe what he hath now. I doo very well like what you haue ſaid (replied Damartyno) and therefore you and I will to morrow go to him, leauing this knight in the caſtle, to anſwere any that comes from the Cittie.

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It were better we all goe together said Palineo) and if any come, we will leaue order with these seruants what they shall do. Be it so (said don Brianell) and I thinke best we goe ere it be day, that we be not seen putting on some of the armor of the giants knights. So resolued on this, went to rest themselues, and about midnight they rose and changed their armour, Damarty no and Palineo taking the best horses in the Castle, departed, commanding their seruants, if any came from the Cittie, they should tell them the Gyant had commanded none should enter to speak with him, because he was not well. And that they should make them answer, according to their demand, in the Gyants behalfe.

CHAP XLVIII.

What befell Don Brianell and his companions, with the Knights of the Lions, and how knowing one another, they all returned to the Castle.

TWo parts of the night were ouerpast, whē the dazeling light of pale shyning Dyana, would giue place vnto the easterne rising of the mornings sunne, whose clear approach, excelleth from the heauens the obscure darkenesse of the gloomie night: when these three knights issued forth of the castle, vpon mighty coursers, with strong and knotty lances in their hands, and onely with two pages to carry their shields, taking the right way to the citie of Siluania, where they thought to finde the duke. Now saith the hystory, they were not gone sir miles from the Citie, but they saw comming towards them, the way they went, two knights, the brauest and gallantest that euer they saw, they brought with them sir pages, al vpō faire horses. Did you euer see gallanter knights in your life, said Don Brianell to Damarty no? No truly replied he. Assure your self, said Palineo, they be not of this country, for none here can sit a horse, nor manage him so brauely, yet by their armor they seeme nouel knights. What makes you think so, said don Brianell? Because they haue on thē no such signes as you, (replied he) whereby it seemes they haue not bin in many cōbats, or at least with that armor, and if you think good, it would not be amisse to try if their substance doth agree with their shewe.

Do not so (said the prudent Damartyno) put not your selfe to such tryall, for oftentimes combats are iestingly begun, but in earnest ender, especially, because me thinks, your knights wil bravely defend themselues. With this talk they came nigh one to the other, whereby they sawe them armed, in a rose coloured armor, exceeding rich and curiously grauen, with many Lyons, crowned with laurell wreathes, one of them stepped forward, and meeting the three knights, in the Persian tongue saluted them, they did the like, with much curtesie. Come you (sir knights, said he of the Lions) from the citie of Antioch? Yes replied they) we yesterday came thence. But why do you aske it? Because (said hee) I go in search of a knight, whome I hope to finde there: it may be you knowe him. What deuise weares he in his armour? Or what is is name, demanded they? I knowe not howe he may call himselfe this way, (replied he of the Lyons.) But he weares a tawney Armor, with a sea waue, and on his shield ingrauen the Picture of a most faire Lady: and I knowe if he be in these parts, he cannot but be named according to the courage and high valour of his minde. Don Brianell hearing this, thought they demanded for Don Bellianis, and because he spake in the persian language, he imagined he was gon from Bollera where he had left him, and that this might be some friend of his, that followed him: and desirous to be better informed of this, said. This knight you aske for, is not in this countrey. But if you wil tell me what you would with him, Ile tell you where you may finde him: for though this knight is no lesse named then you say, none can giue you better instruction of him then I. That I fayne would speake with him, there is nothing I more desire: therefore you may greatly fauour me, to tell me the place of his abode without farther question. I will tell you (said don Brianell) and let me knowe your name? I am called the knight of the Lions (said he) I am neuer the wiser for that name (replied don Brianel) and therefore vnlesse you be more plaine, you shal not know of me what you would. You are a strange man (said the knight of the lions) to denie me my request, hauing told you my name, for in that you know me not, I am not bound to tell you, who my grandsire was. It is a meruaile you are not knowne (answered Palmeo)

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hauing ended so many aduentures, with that armour, which they so testifie, seeming wondrous battered, and it may be a wonder, you were not without farther question knowne, since the Kingdome of Antioch is so full of your prowesses. Whereunto the Knight of the Lyons thus replyed. By your wordes I perceiue, because I should not by you haue said, what you did by me, you so haue mangled your armor, and not that with them, you haue been in any fight: And if you haue in you, such deedes as words, proudly to breath vnseemely feats, I gladly would breake a launce with you, vpon condition, that if I vanquish you, this knight be bound to tell me what I demaunded, and if I be vanquished, yours shall be my armour, that you may implove them in such enterprises you speake of. Be it as you please (answered Palineo) if my companion will agree to the condition. I am content (said Don Bryanell.) Whereupon Palineo turned him about to take his carrere, so did the Knight of the Lions, with great furie meeting in the middest of their course, and staying themselues in their saddles, their incounters were so strong, that the Knight of the Lions losse his stirropes: But Palineo by the fierce shoute, was vnhorst cleane ouer his horse cropper: and his aduersarie passe away with most gallant continent, towards don Bryanell, that much wondred at the braue incounter, to him thus saying. Seeing (sir Knight) in you remaines, to discharge the condition of our controuersie, I intreate you to satisfie my demande: Don Bryanell beeing about to answere him, arrued Palineo, saying. Knight of the Lions, let vs end our battell, for though I haue fallen, I am not ouercome. I am bound to no more (said he, hauing said I would but breake one launce, and since you are fallen, you haue no reason to vrge this any more, but that this Knight doe keepe his promise. Let him be iudged first ouercome said don Bryanell, and the rest shall quickly be fulfilled. But the other Knight of the Lions, seeing this, went to them, saying. There can no right iudgement be giuen on this controuersie, for both you will say he is not vanquished, though he be. But I will trie it with you (said he) towards don Brianell, which of them is vanquished, and therefore passe no sentence percon, for our battell shall arbitrate it, and what we else

Don Briaenll perceiuing that the knight threatned him, made no answere, but rained his horse about, cowching his Lance to meete his aduersarie, who was nothing slack to doo the like. And like two furious lions incountred with mightie strength, making the earth tremble vnder them.

The Prince don Bryanell encountred the knight of the Lions, in such sort, that penetrating his shælde and armor, hee made him bēd his head backwards vnto his horse crooper. But the knight of the Lyons, stroke him on the vysor of his helme, which being of a fine temper, resisted there the furie of the Launce, which for all that, breake his laces, making it flie from his head, constraining him to saue himselfe, by holding about his horses necke, almost besides himselfe: thinking he had lost his eyes. In this maner stoode he a while, till he recouered his sences, and then seeing his aduersarie come towards him, with his sword drawne, ashamed of his accident, and mad with rage, did the like, couering his head with his shælde, for want of a helme. But ere he could doo so, he was sodainly knowne by the knight of the Lyons, and hee that iousted with him, thinking he had done him some greate harme, sheathed his sword, and in the Grecksh tongue, said. Stay Prince of Macedon, for you must not combatte with me. Which don Bryanell seeing, did the like, and said. Who are you, that knowes me in a strange land? The knight not replying, vnlaced his helme, whom straight Don Bryanell did so too, demanding for his deare Brother Don Bellianis? He is very farre from hence (replyed Don Bryanell.) But what is that valiant knight that comes with you? It is my Brother Don Clarineo of Spaine (answered he) and I doe greatly ioy to haue met with you, for else we knewe not what to do.

By this Don Clarineo was thither come, and with great loue imbraced him, and said. To the great wonder of Damartyno and Palineo, to see their good agreement, it had almoste cost vs deare, to knowe of you against your will, what we required, and I assure you, if you longer conceale your selfe, I will no more take you.

We are in a strange Land (replyed Don Bryanell) therefore

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can I do no otherwise, though more danger it should cost me. But what shall we do? for thinking to finde you in necessitie, the Emperor and vs, shipt our selues with one hundred thousand men, which are not farre from hence. For knowing you were come to restore the Princesse Aurora to her kingdome, we departed to aid you.

Where left you my Lord the Emperour, demaunded Don Brianell? He is not with vs? I assure you (answere Lucidamore) for he and Sauian of Trebento were separated from vs, by a certaine aduenture. All this talked they, that Damartyno and Palineo did not vnderstand, though they thought they knew one another.

Wherefore don Brianell said to the Princes, it behoueth you to say, that the Souldan of Babilon hath sent this armie, to plant the Princesse Aurora, in her kingdome, that these knights may more willingly further vs: for in these affaires, they are very forward. Is my brother here, demanded Don Clarianeo, and my Cousin, the Prince Arsileo? I left them in Persia (replied Don Brianell) in a bloodie controuersie against the Souldane, about the death of Don Galfeo of Antioch. Is it possible said (Don Clarianeo?) I assure you, you haue greatly gladded me with the death of that traytor: but tell me, did my brother Don Bellianis kill him? He did (answered Don Brianell,) and hereafter I will informe you al the manner how. And now aduertise your Pages to say, you all now come away from Babylon. So they shall, sayde Don Clarianeo.

Whereupon Don Brianell called to him Palineo, (that was much abashed at his fall) and said to him and Damartyno. You are (sir knights) to giue the immortal gods great thanks, for directing our affaires better then wee wished, for these knights are my neere kinsmen, and for whome I would vndertake any danger in the world. I speake this Syr Palineo, because you should not ber your selfe at your chance, nor diminish your good will towards me, for what is past. And besides all this, they are come about the same matter (we haue in hand) landing a strong army, sent to this end, frō the Soldan of Babilon; which wil not a little help vs, being

here hard by: Wherefore consider what best we may doo, for in this nor in any thing else, none of vs will in no manner contradict your counsaile. Whereunto Palmeo somewhat comforted, made this answere.

I could not haue receiued greater comfort for my ouerthrowe then this, being done by such a knight, and your Allye, for which cause, he onely deserueth to gain the honor of all aduentures in the world: therfore do I remain no lesse bound to his seruice, though I beleeue he little needes it, then heretofore I was to yours. I doo greatly thanke you Sir knight said Don Clarineo, thinking my selfe happie to haue met you, and do reioyce we came not to handy blowes, being sure to haue beene vanquished by you, as your courteous words, sufficiently do shewe. And therefore, I do surrender all the honour of the victorie to you, as your due, and resting yours for euer, as my future deedes shall approue. And so imbracing one another, exyled all enuious rancor from their valiant hearts. This done, Damartyno said: he thought good, they all returned to the Castle, whence that morning they were returned, where they might conclude what should be performed, and that in the meane while, one of the Pages should goe and charge the Armie to stay where they had left it, till they receiued farther order. This counsaile being alowed, they sent two of their pages with this cõmand, and themselues returned to the Castle, where hauing rested that day, they resolued that the prince Don Lucidamore and Damartyno, should that night goe vnto the army, and before the morning light, they should cõduct close to the walles of Antioch, which they alreadie knew to be in armes, with about one hundred thousand fighting men, because by their spyes they were aduertised of their power, and the vsurping king accounting them to bee enemies, determined to meete them in field, yet commanding the Cittie gates to be fast shut, least vnwares it should be surprised, leauing within 40. thousand men to defend it. And he with the County Gariano, prepared to set forth. Moreouer, it was resolued, that don Clarineo and don Brianel, with his friend Palmeo, should passe through the myne into the Cittie, procure to open one of her gates that they might enter to them, and by that meanes win it, which

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was so strongly fortified with munition and men, that they within feared nothing, for the space of two yeares. So Damartyno & his companion, departed to the armie, where arriuing, hee greatly reioyced to see the good order thereof. Don Lucidamore, notwithstanding his pages had deliuered his message, did himself giue cõmandement, they should say they were sent by the great Soldan of Babylon.

CHAP. XLIX.

The great danger the Princesse don Clarineo, & don Brianell, sustained in the citie of Antioch: how they were succored by the knight of the sle Balik. The winning of the Cittie, and the death of the Tyrant Tramolcano.

THe appointed houre being come, which made euery one think it a year, so much they desired to be within Antioch, hauing seene the signall of the approach of the Emperors armie, the valiant knights don Clarineo, don Brianel, and the politick Palmeo, opening the doore of the mine, went through it to the Pallace, but they were scarce at the pallace side, when they heard a great noise, and harkening what it might be, they vnderstood it was, because the army of strangers had so sodainly appeared before the walles, whither the king Tramalcano, with the coũty Gariano, were going, with an infinit compaine, to see if they would assault the Cittie before the morne, whereto there lacked not two houres. All which indeede was so: for Don Lucidamore and Damartyno, hauing cõmanded all their mẽ to hang scarfes vpon their armor to be known from their enemies, did at that time conduct their troupes, hard by the gate, which should be opened for their entrance. Be quiet said Palmeo, and lette mee go forth to see what we were best to do. Do what you will (answered Don Brianell) for heere wee le stay for you. And presently opening the doore, softly hee went forth: How like you this knight, said Don Bryanell? What should I saye of him? (answered Clarineo) but that I neuer sawe a more braner knight, I meane of more policie, in all my life before.

Hereuppon don Bryanel, recounted vnto him, all that in his companie he had done, which greatly contented Don Clarineo: at which time, he returned, saying. (Sir knight) the Gyant is gone, with all his companie, let vs now followe him, doing as the time shall minister occasion. They did so, thrusting themselues among those that were going to the walles, where arriuing, they saw the gate fast shutte, which they had determined to open, and that the Gyant hauing paste a Garison there, was going to speake with the County Gariano.

I beleeue (said Palineo) wee shall haue more adoo to open the Gate, then wee had thought. I haue (aunswered don Clarineo) considered, how we may doo it: which is, that your Cousen (meaning don Bryanell) shall keepe the passage from the Mine, letting no more passe hither: and that you (Sir Palineo) shall by force take the keyes from the Porter, and with them, procure to open the gate, and I will defend you, from these that are alreadie here: And this must be with the speede, that the valour of our courageous hearts, and their charge we haue enterprised, doth binde vs to. Whereupon don Brianell setled himselfe in the passage, which being narrowe, he could scarce defend himselfe. Palineo with greate courage, by the light of many torches, that were kindled, stepped to the Porter, and with his sword cleaning his head in two, at one blowe, snatcht the keyes from his side, but ere he did it, many knightes assaulted him, to giue him his death. The valiant Prince don Clarineo, not forgetting what he had to doo, stept before, to defend him, bestowing so mightie and mortall blowes, on euery one which approched, that they fledde from him, as from the presence of death. By this time had Palineo, through his speedie diligence, opened the gate, had not the fearefull Tramoleano (hearing that suddaine accident there) with an infinit number of knights, returned with his heauie Mace, ramming w̄ such a furie, that if don Clarineo had not stepped behinde the dead horses and knightes, that he had slaine, he had wonderously scaped his life, at that first fury of the horses incounters, but doing as is said, he wounded the mightie Gyants horse, thrusting his sword quite through his head, that the furious beast, in such manner raised

ſed himſelfe, that he ouerthrewe his Maiſter. The treacherous Countie Galliano, would haue done the like by Palmeo, but hee ſtepping aſide, tumbled him from his horſe, with one blowe. And certainely, they could not haue giuen two better blows, then theſe, that more might helpe them. For when the Gyants knights, that were about a hundred, ſawe their maiſters downe, alighted alſo, becauſe the narrownesſe of the place might not be a cauſe to hurt them, with their horſes. The fearefull Gyant being very heauie, with great paine rayſed himſelfe, and foming through his mouth, blaſphemming all his Gods, went againſt Clarineo, who being ioyned with Don Brianell, were both in a fierce ſkermidge, giuing, and receiuing mightie blowes, whoſe eccho rebounded in ỳ campe without the cittie. And the gyant ſeeing him there, ruſht in, to hold him, whyle his men did kill him, but hauing no aduantage in ſtrength ouer him, don Clarineo to ſcape from his handes, braue-lie pluckt him to him, that both fell downe, where hee was pitti-ouſly wounded, and had not his ſtrong armour defended him, he there had left his life. And getting from the Gyant, he began with them a moſt cruell fight (with ſuch danger as any may imagine.) Whom Palmeo ſeeing ſo ſore wounded, wõdred how he breathed. Don Bryanell was in no leſſe perill, for ſo many layd on him, with haſte to paſſe by, that he bleeded as faſt as any of them. In this daunger were they all three, looking for nothing but death, though the King and Trapter County, were wounded no leſſe then they. For Don Clarineo minding to leaue his life reuenged, ſo laide on them and others, that all were imbrued in their owne bloods. And whoſoeuer then had ſeene them, would haue rather iudged them ſo many raging Tigers, or hungrie Lions, then knights, hoping of no ſuccor of thẽ without: for thogh they procured to enter, could not approch the gates, being defended by ỳ gyants gariſon. While this thus paſſe, at ſuch time as the giuer of the bright light illuminated the darke night, there came downe a valley, not farre from the cittie, a mightie piller of fire, & after it, followed a knight, with two of the vgliest gyants, that euer were ſeene, who with ſuch furious ſpeede (as doth a thunderbolt breake through the aire) approached to the Wall, and ſette a Ladder againſt it.

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The knight that came with them, whose armor was all garnished with Basilisks, alighted from his horse, and without let of any that were below, he mounted thereon to the top of the wall, where he bestowed such deadly blowes, that ere they were aware of him, he had tumbled aboue fiftie ouer it dead. Don Lucidamore, that such haughtie prowesse saw in one knight, leauing his armie to Damartynos charge, quickly climed the ladder, and scarcely was he on the top, when the giants taking it, returned the way, and in the maner they did come, leauing the beholders amazed with wonder. The knight of the Basiliske comming, instructed in what he should do, descended certaine steps of stone that were in the wall, beating downe on both sides many knights before him, clearing the way for don Lucidamore, that followed him, making no lesse slaughter then he, on that rebellious people. At length he arriued at the gate where don Brianell was, wearie and tyred, who seeing the knight of the Basilisks, thinking him to be one of his enemies, stroke him a mightie blow, but he knowing him, defended it with his sheild, and rusht in where he was: there spied he Clarineo, that had before him aboue thirtie Kinges slaine, and then with one blowe, threwe the Countie Gariano dead to the earth, but was in extreame daunger, because he loked to the trusty Palineo, who through the much blood he had lost, was in a trance, that he was faine to beare him close to the wall, where he kept him before, himselfe making stupendious deedes. And there arriuing the knight of the Basilisks, in the Grecish tongue he sayde. Courage, braue knight: for you are alreadie succoured. At the ende of which words, with one mightie blowe he cut off the Giants leg, that he fell downe, where he breathed his last, and beating away all the knights about him, he quickly freed that Gate, stepping both vnto the Portall thereof, where Lucidamore, and don Brianell were. And the troopes that were without, seeing they could not enter in, had ouerthrowne all that side, making a great breach in the wall, through which ten knights might easily passe together, with such furie prelling in, that they extreamely were oppressed. Defend you this entrie (said don Clarineo,) to the knight of the Basilisk) while I open yonder gate, which he did so

so brauely, that in despight of them that first arriued, he first ouerthrew aboue fiue hundred dead, and deadly wounded, making the rest giue place vnto his puissant strokes. Don Clarineo went to Palineo for the keyes, which he by no means would let go out of his handes, and with them opened the gate. Which being seene of the campe, with great clamours approached to enter into the Citie. The knight of the Basiliskes, and his companions, perceiuing it, withdrewe themselues to giue that furie place, with whose arriuall the battell in such manner was renued, that the place was filled with heaped Mountaines of dead men: and this because the king Tramolcanos multitudes were infinite, and expert. and knowing that if they lost the Citie, they should all pay the tribute of their deathes by their enemies swordes, fought like mad men. But the Princes hauing recouered they' knights, togither with the knight of the Basiliskes, and don Clarineo, hauing assured the person of Palineo, whom he founde with life, uniting themselues, pressing in the thickest of the battell, with such courage, as they augmented in themselues, with desire to see those affaires terminated with a good ende. The curreuts of blood beganne to runne about so fast, like Riuers descending from so many mountaine toppes. Damartyno considering that the Citie would hardly be wonne by that meanes, by reason of the manie people within to defend it, commaunded all his men to name alcude the Princesse Aurora, which they so did, saying, Antioch, Antioch, for the Princesse Aurora. Which crie and name, the people of the Countrey hearing, and thinking their Ladie and Princesse was there, whom they so greatly desired, abandoned the men belonging as well vnto the traytour Countie, as the Giant, and withdrewe themselues, which they had not don in the beginning, because they thought them enemies vnto the Citie, and land, themselues crying within as the others did without, trampling vnder their horse hoofes, and massacring without pitie those traitors, in such sort, to reuenge themselues, for the outrages done by them, that ere it was wonne, they left not one aliue to beare the newes of their desolation, hauing slaine that morning aboue fourescore thousand, wanting not aboue fiue thousand Christians. And this hapned through

Damarynos policie, which if it had not bæne (though their aduersaries had also in the end all died by the sword) their losses had bin infinit. This done, don Lucidamore caused to be proclaimed, that none vpon paine of death should sturre any thing in the Citie, but quietly lodge therein, without oppressing or molesting any way the meanest Citizen of the same. And hauing taken all the fortresses, castels and holds of the Citie to their power, calling don Clarineo, and don Brianel with him, went all togither to the knight of the Basilisk, who being mounted, would depart. But don Clarineo, remembring the danger he had freed him from, with great loue imbraced him, saying.

Oh most glorious and renowmed knight, the excellentest that euer did draw sword, I hope you will not so greatly wrong vs, so to depart vnknowne, hauing liberated all of vs from so great danger. For which not onely our liues, but the whole glorie of the lasting victorie of this battell, is too little recompence. For such ayd, thinking our selues sufficietly honored, by sole knowing what you are. This spake he in the Græke language: for when he at first did succour him, he incouraged him in the same tongue. I know not (excellent Prince) answered the knight of the basilisk, how I may cancell the bandes you tie me in, by the incomparable merits of your wordes, yet notwithstanding vnlose my helme Don Lucidamore more amazed then at first, to know his brother, did presently vnbuckle it, whereby the excellencie of his complexion was seene. Whom don Clarineo knowing, rested so confused with content, that the teares ran downe his cheekes, and with a high voice, said. Oh mightie Lord, that for vs all did suffer, what great wonder do I see: hauing before mine eies my deare Lord & brother the Prince don Bellianis? Whereupon he straight lept from his horse, to kisse his hand. The like did all the rest. Don Bellianis seeing them do so, dismounted also from his horse to imbrace all those knights, with such content as may be imagined. Here wants nothing now (said don Lucidamore to end our demaund: but the presence of our Lord the Emperor. That shall not need (replied don Bellianis) for I me left him well within the Citie of Bollera, and hard by Persepolis, whither we must go with all speede.

How

How arriued he there demanded don Clarineo, hauig left himselfe farre from thence: That I knowe not (said don Bellianis but I left him where I tell you, and there I beleeue we shal finde him. Here were they seperated by the multitude of the knights, ỹ came to doe their duties to don Bellianis, not able to expresse their ioye with his sight: And he commanded them all, to keepe his, and all their names secrete, for he would haue none of the Cittie knowe what they were. And hauing done with their greetings, they went to the king Tramoleanos Pallace, where they lodged, and their men about the Cittie were entertained hauing voyded it, of the dead carcases, offering no iniurie nor wrong to any Cittizen. They also carried the noble Palmeo to the Pallace, which had recouered his sences, whom all those knightes visited, and highlie honoured. With whose presence, he highly reioyced, as also to see those businesse ended. Don Clarineo and don Brianell were layd in two rich beddes, hard by Palmios, where their wounds, which were many, were dressed by verie skilfull Chirurgions. Don Bellianis taking in his companie Damartyno, whome hee greatly esteamed, for the Princesse Auroraes reporte of him, and went about the Cittie, and assembling together all the States thereof, and chiefest Cittizens of the same. Don Bellianis made them a shorte discourse, thanking them for their loyaltie, they alwayes obserued, promising they should all haue their losses requited, with full and ample satisfaction and shewed them the letter written to Damartyno. They greately conselated by his speech, promised to procure the restitution of the whole kingdome: vpon which conclusion, don Bellianis returned to the Pallace, leauing Damartyno giuing order, to recouer the reste of the Prouince, without more spilling of blood. To which effect he sent messengers, to all Cities and places of importance in the kingdome,

CHAP. L.

Howe the whole kingdome of Antioch being recouered, the state of the Countie Gariano was giuen vnto the politike Palmeo of the Venture, and leauing Damartyno gouernor there, all those Princes departed towards Persia.

SO soone as it was knowne through all the kingdome of Antioche, the totall ruine and vtter destruction of the vsurping king, and all his forces, they all arose against the Tyrants garrisons, knowing those Knights came from their lawfull and right Princesse, so that vtterly subuerting those aduerse strengths, leauing no man with life, they sent Ambassadors to Antioche, to make them know these euents, so happily brought to ende: which greatlie gladded them, sending thither Gouernours to order those vprores, till all thinges else were otherwise concluded. By this time the wounded Knights were through well, except Palmeo, that being worse wounded, was longer in healing. But one day being altogither in Councell, it was determined, that Damartyno (as before) should sway the gouernment of the whole kingdome, and did sweare all the people to obey him. And though he refused it, alledging he was farre in yeares, and therefore it better became him to withdraw vnto a priuate life, leauing the variable chaunces of the giddie worlde: yet in the ende he was forced to do it, at the intreaties of all the Nobilitie of the lande, that highlie esteemed them. And don Bellianis hauing vnderstood of his cosen don Brianell, the great toyle and daungers that the politike Palmeo had in those businesses sustained, called him before all the greatest Peeres, saying thus.

If the merits that your valour, and your worthy person do deserue, should accordingly be recompenced (valiant & politike warriour) all this kingdom were insufficient to counterpoise your high deserts, being by your onely means recouered: for it is manifest, that you were the cause of the restitution therof, as also of Damartynos libertie: the glorie of all which things deseruedly should be to your

your selfe be attributed. Which notwithstanding, I intreat you, (not regarding the smalnesse of the gift, but the good will of the giuer, and as a token of your farther deseruings) to accept as your owne, the whole estate, and Lands belonging to the County Gariano: wishing it were in a better time, that I might expresse my loue towards you, with larger effects, according to the balance of my minde. Yet will I procure the Princesse Aurora to confirme you this, with promise of a greater recompence. All these Lordes that were there present, highly allowed and commended, what Don Bellianis had, especially the Princes Don Bryanell and Clarineo. To whom Palineo thus made answere. Excellent Prince, and most heroycke, for so may I with reason though I do not know you) call you, hauing on me extended the magnificence, of your royall minde, by the bountie of your liberall hand, which in no lesse a person then I speake of can be seene, hauing done nothing that might deserue so much as the company of such famous knights: but the greatnesse of your largenesse passing al compare, bindeth me to this: And so doo I receiue these fauours, onely to imploy the same, together with my life in your seruice: the Princesse Aurora my soueraigne Lady, beseeching the immortall gods, that when I do forget this dutie, that then I may be made an example of the like ingratitude to all in the vniuersall orbe. And thereupon prostrating himself vpon his knees, desired to kisse his hande. But Don Bellianis refusing it, imbraced him with great affection. The like did all the other knights: calling him thereafter Count Gariano, hauing deserued it by the vertue and valour of his minde, possessing nothing of his ancestors, but a horse and armes, & weapons. Don Bellianis hauing finished this action commanded, all his army speedily to ship themselues, charging all the leaders and Captaines to bend their voyage to Persia, and attend his comming or order, from him at Persepolis: making them knowe the danger wherein he had left the Emperor there. They with a good winde departed, leauing don Bellianis alone, with onely his brothers, and don Bryanell, that determined to meete them by land. After all this, they continued eight dates in Antioch, which being pacified and quieted, they resolued the insuing day to depart. The

Count Gariano, and the Gouerno; Damartyno, greatly sorrowing for their absence: but before they went, they so much intreated them to discouer themselues, that don Bellianis not able to deny it, told them what they were, taking their words, they should not disclose it to any who rested amazed: yet very glad that these affaires were concluded by so great a prince: and giuing the guides to direct their way to Persia, they at length departed. In which iourney leauing them, the Vyllone here endeth this first part: hauing her tempest beaten barke, in the doubtfull surges of accepting hope, on the quiet shoare of your most gentle and patronaging fauours.

FINIS.